

**PERIODIC REPORT (7TH & 8TH) OF EGYPT
PRESENTED TO THE AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND
PEOPLES' RIGHTS, FOR THE PERIOD 2001 TO 2004**

The present report emanates from the high commission created within the Directorate General on Human Rights Affairs of the Ministry of Justice, by ministerial decree n°6445 of 2003, during the session held on 28/09/2004. The final version was drafted by a specially established drafting committee of the Directorate General on Human Rights Affairs of the Ministry of Justice.

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**PERIODIC REPORT (7TH & 8TH) OF EGYPT
PRESENTED TO THE AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND
PEOPLES' RIGHTS**

INTRODUCTION

Egypt has the honour of presenting its periodic report (7th and 8th) to the Commission, in accordance with article 62 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and under the framework of the guidelines published by the honourable Commission.

The first part of this report deals with Egypt's contribution to international human rights instruments, as well as the legal framework for the protection of human rights principles in Egypt, and the legal framework of the African Charter, which is the object of this report. It also indicates new legislative measures that have been introduced for the effective implementation of international treaties and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights; the national authorities that guarantee the effective implementation of human rights principles, and the national mechanisms that have been put in place. The second part deals with the objective application of the provisions of the Charter, and in particular, the most recent developments in the area of teaching, raising awareness and disseminating international and regional human rights agreements, in line with the guidelines. It also reports on progress made both at regional and international level, and speaks about the efforts deployed by Egypt in its cooperation with African States parties to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

It must be indicated that where the topics mentioned have already been dealt with in the previous report by Egypt, we shall limit ourselves to referring to that report in order to avoid repetition and to spare the time of the honourable Commission.

PREAMBLE

Egypt acceded to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights by decree of the Republic n° 77 of 1984. The Charter was published in the Official Journal in the Arabic language and entered into force in the country as from 21/10/1986. At the time of accession, Egypt had entered a reservation on the implementation of articles 8 and 18/3; that these articles had to be implemented in the light of the provisions of Islamic Shari'a law and could not be in contradiction of the latter.

PART ONE

This part comprises the following chapters:

CHAPTER ONE: UPDATE OF STATISTICAL INDICATORS IN THE MEMBER STATE

CHAPTER TWO: EGYPT'S INVOLVEMENT IN AND CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES

CHAPTER THREE: GENERAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN EGYPT

CHAPTER FOUR: LEGAL SITUATION OF THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS IN EGYPT

CHAPTER FIVE: RECENT NATIONAL LEGISLATION ON THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL TREATIES AND THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

CHAPTER SIX: DOMESTIC REMEDIES TO ENSURE THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES, AND NATIONAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

**CHAPTER ONE: UPDATE OF STATISTICAL INDICATORS IN THE
MEMBER STATE**

To start with, Egypt would like to recall the contents of its previous report and supplement these with some of the latest changes reported in the annual review of statistical indicators, as carried out during the general census of 1996, as follows:

- 1- Surface area: 9.97 million square kilometres.
- 2- Population: 68.6 million according to the statistical indicators at 1/01/2004 as against 61.4 million in 1996. 51.14% of the population are males, and 48.86% are females.
- 3- There has been a reduction in natural evolution from 2.04% in 2001 to 19.6 per thousand at the end of 2003.
- 4- Birth rate has gone down from 26.69 per 1000 in 2001 to 26.12 per 1000 in 2003.
- 5- The mortality rate in 2003 was 6.48 per 1000.
- 6- The mortality ratio of mothers/live births has reduced from 174/100 000 in 1993 to 68/10 000 in 2003 (Ministry of Health and the Population).

Reduction in mortality rate of mothers during the period covered by the present report:

Year	Per each live birth	Rate
2000	84/100.000	
2001	75/100.000	10%
2002	70/100.000	16%
2003	68/100.000	19%

The average rate of the gap is about 15% per year.

7- Estimation of the total population per age group:

Age group	Males	Females	Total	Percentage
Under 5 years	4023344	3854436	7877780	11.47%
5 to 25 years	16511834	15268258	31780092	46.20%
25 to 60 years	12531819	12509790	25041609	36.50%
Years	---	---	---	---
60 +	811043	804448	1615491	2.40%
65 +	586161	491996	1078157	1.60%
70 +	362210	345241	707451	1.03%
75 and above	279165	268744	547909	0.80%
Total in the Republic at 01/01/2004	35105576	33542913	68648489	

8- Life expectancy at birth:

At 1st January 2003, life expectancy at birth was 67.5 years for males and 71.9 years for females. In 1996, these figures were 65.1 and 69 years respectively.

The percentage of the population living in urban areas was 42.4% in 2002, compared to 44% in 1986. The percentage of the rural population was 56.6% in 2002, compared to 56% in 1986.

9- Characteristics of the population:

A- Education:

- (1) The percentage of illiterates among people aged 10 and above has dropped from 38.6% in 1996 to 29.88% at the end of 2002.
- (2) The number of pupils in both public and private pre-university institutions increased from 1 143 687 for the 2000/2001 school year to 15 438 790 for 2003/2004.
- (3) The number of students in universities increased from 1 351 173 in 1998/1999 (758 038 males – 593 135 females) to 1 489 415 in 2001/2002 (801 714 males – 687 701 females).
- (4) The number of university graduates rose from 224 089 in 1998/1999 to 248 451 in 2001.

B) Labour force:

In 2002/2003, the active population represented 18.2 million people, as compared to 16.955 million in 1997/1998.

10-Economic indicators:

A) Gross national product and real growth rate:

	2001/2002	2002/2003
Gross national product at the value of production factors (in billions of Egyptian pounds)	354.5	365.8
Growth rate (%)	3.2	3.2
Gross national product at market price (in billions of pounds)	381.7	393.4
Growth rate (%)	3.2	3.1

(Source: 2002/2003 annual report of the Egyptian Central Bank)

B) Trade balance: The trade balance deficit dropped by 12.0%, that is 6.6 billion dollars during the 2002/2003 financial year, as against a reduction of 7.5 billion dollars during the preceding year.

C) Developments in investment operations in the social services sector:

- Final year of the 1997/98 – 2001/2002 five-year plan, in accordance with law n° 85 of 2001.

Millions of Egyptian pounds

Social service sectors	Total	Percentage
Habitat	11161.9	13.1%
Services	4690.4	5.5%
Human and social development	----	----
Education	3050.3	3.6%
Health	2241.2	2.6%
Other services	2348.3	2.6%
Total of the social service sectors	23392.1	27.4%

- Investment operations of the 2002/2003 – 2006/2007 five-year plan, in application of law n° 87 of 2002.

Millions of Egyptian pounds

Social service sectors	Total	Percentage
Habitat	36288.6	8.1%
Services	38624.0	8.6%
Human and social development	----	----
Education	32351.9	7.2%
Health	17331.4	3.9%
Other services	15596.9	3.4%
Total of the social service sectors	140192.8	31.2%

- Investment operations for the first year of the five-year plan (2002/2003), in accordance with law n° 86 of 2002.

Millions of Egyptian pounds

Social service sectors	Total	Percentage
Habitat	8623.5	11.6 %
Services	6347.0	8.4%
Human and social development	----	----
Education	4358.2	5.9%
Health	2849.1	3.8%
Other services	3041.7	4.1%
Total of the social service sectors	25219.5	34.0%

- Total of investments:

	2001/2002 2002/2003		2001/2002 2002/2003		2002/2003
	(Value in billions of pounds)		Percentage (%)		Growth rate %
Total investment	<u>67,5</u>	<u>68,1</u>	<u>100,0</u>	<u>100,0</u>	<u>0,9</u>
Public	35,7	32,3	52,8	47,5	(9,4)
Private	31,8	35,8	47,2	52,5	12,4

(Source: 2002/2003 annual report of the Egyptian Central Bank)

CHAPTER TWO: EGYPT'S INVOLVEMENT IN AND CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES

Due to its long-standing history and its geographical situation, Egypt is at the crossroads of three continents. Egypt has been an active member of the international family and has influenced and been influenced by world events. It has participated in and contributed in its own way and by its own means to the entrenchment of the values of law and justice, the progress and development of peoples, and the preservation of their freedom or their self-determination.

The heritage of civilisation in Egypt and the historical experience of many eras has imbued the Egyptian people with human characteristics and values such as forgiveness and peace. This is the wellspring of the strength of action of Egypt, and this is what has naturally placed Egypt at the forefront of States that, with the international community, deploy considerable efforts to bring about an entrenchment of the principles of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to ensure that all the peoples of the earth may effectively enjoy these rights and principles. Egypt was thus one of the fifty States that drafted and signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Egypt has also acceded to all existing international and regional treaties in this area.

Egypt has complied with the noble principles that advocate the international and indivisible nature of human rights as established by the international community. Indeed, this principle is enshrined in the Egyptian constitution of 1971 and in particular article 53, which stipulates that the State shall grant the right of political asylum to any foreigner who has been oppressed for having defended the interests of peoples, human rights, peace or justice.

The Egyptian constitution stands out because it enshrines the principle that there is no statute of limitations for criminal or civil suits resulting from violations of human rights. This clearly illustrates the determination of the society to ensure that justice prevails and that any person who presumes to violate the rights and fundamental freedoms of others is sanctioned, no matter how much time has gone by. Time cannot wipe away these crimes. On the basis of this vision, Egypt works with the international community in the framework of the following treaties:

- **International treaties to which Egypt has acceded:**

- 1- **The 1926 Slavery convention and the 1953 and 1956 protocols amending the convention.**
- 2- **The 1948 convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide.**
- 3- **The 1930 convention n° 29 on compulsory and forced labour.**
- 4- **The 1956 supplementary convention on the abolition of slavery, the slave trade, and institutions and practices similar to slavery.**
- 5- **The 1957 abolition of forced labour convention n° 105.**
- 6- **The 1949 convention for the suppression of the traffic in persons and of the exploitation of the prostitution of others.**
- 7- **The 1966 international convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination.**
- 8- **The 1973 international convention on the suppression and punishment of the crime of apartheid.**
- 9- **The 1967 convention and the protocol relating to the status of refugees.**
- 10- **The 1952 convention on the political rights of women.**
- 11- **The 1979 convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.**
- 12- **The 1966 international covenant on civil and political rights.**
- 13- **The 1966 international covenant on economic, social and cultural rights.**
- 14- **The 1984 convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.**
- 15- **The international convention on the rights of the child.**
- 16- **The 1985 international convention against apartheid in sports.**
- 17- **The 1990 international convention on the protection of migrant workers and their family members.**

Egypt has also acceded to the following conventions over the period covered by the present report:

- 18- The 1999 convention n° 182 concerning the prohibition of the worst forms of child labour. Egypt acceded by Republican decree n° 69 of 2002.
- 19- The first optional protocol to the Convention on the rights of the child, adopted in 2000, on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography. Done by Republican decree n° 104 of 2002.
- 20- The second optional protocol to the Convention on the rights of the child, adopted in 2000, on the involvement of children in armed conflict. Done by Republican decree n° 105 of 2002.

- **Regional treaties to which Egypt has acceded:**

- 1- The 1969 African convention on the problem of refugees.
- 2- The 1980 African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.
- 3- The 1983 Arab Charter on the rights of the child.
- 4- The 1990 African Charter on the Rights and Well-being of the child. Done by Republican decree n° 33 of 2001.
- 5- The convention on the Arab organisation of women of 2002. Done by Republican decree n° 133 of 2002.

(This list does not include those conventions signed by Egypt for which ratification is pending.)

The foregoing clearly shows the scope of participation of Egypt in international and regional human rights treaties, and its determination to give such instruments international legitimacy. It also shows the efforts that are constantly deployed to legalise these principles and include them in clear and explicit international texts that expressly include a commitment to respect, protect, and promote human rights, as well as to find the appropriate mechanisms to protect and monitor the implementation of such conventions in the international arena.

It is also clear that this legitimacy is consecrated domestically, because international conventions that are published in the Official Journal are considered as domestic laws to be enforced, as indicated in the previous report by Egypt.

**CHAPTER THREE: GENERAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE
PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES AND FUNDAMENTAL
FREEDOMS IN EGYPT**

**CHAPTER FOUR: LEGAL SITUATION OF THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON
HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS IN EGYPT**

For these two points, Egypt would simply refer readers to its previous report, in order to avoid repetition and to spare the time of the honourable Commission.

CHAPTER FIVE: RECENT NATIONAL LEGISLATION ON THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL TREATIES AND THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

Under this section, we shall be looking at the developments in legislation that have taken place over the period covered by the present report, that is from 2001 to 2004.

Egypt has participated actively in international and regional human rights activities. It is also determined to fulfil its commitments and to closely monitor the results of consideration of its international reports to international mechanisms and this honourable Commission. Thanks to the foregoing, Egypt has been able to implement legal changes that allow it to be in compliance with the provisions of international and regional human rights treaties, thus enabling its accession to international and regional human rights agreements. Upon this basis, the following laws and Republican decrees were promulgated in Egypt over the period under consideration:

1- LAWS:

In 2001:

- A- Law n° 1 of 2001, on the creation of the library in Alexandria, for the promotion of the right to culture.**
- B- Laws n° 18, 19, and 20 of 2001, awarding civil servants a special allowance and a salary increase. This demonstrates the continued efforts of government to improve the living standards of citizens. This is one of the most important laws, as it emphasises the fact that the State takes social issues into account in implementing its privatisation programmes following the transition to market rules.**
- C- Law n° 148 of 2001, governing the financing of property acquisition. This law sets the legal framework required to resolve the problem of financing this activity and help deal with the obstacles in the way of enjoyment of the right to accommodation.**
- D- Law n° 152 of 2001 amending law n° 396 of 1956, relating to the organisation of prisons and prohibiting corporal punishment in Egyptian prisons.**

In 2002:

A) – Law n° 1 de 2002 amending the provisions of law n° 73 of 1956, governing the organisation of political rights and the monitoring of elections by the judiciary in line with the rulings of the Superior Constitutional Court. The aim is to ensure the impartiality of the electoral process, and that it is carried out under the control of an independent justice system, as required by law. This has consolidated the right of all citizens to participate actively in exercising their political rights and in the management of the public affairs of the country.

B) - Law n° 3 of 2002 amending the provisions of the law on judicial power and the laws governing judicial bodies by raising the retirement age from 64 to 66. The objective is to strengthen these bodies by allowing members who have acquired great experience to continue their activities, and also to allow the system of justice to tackle the growing number of cases and accelerate the process of dispute settlement, thus strengthening the right to seek remedy at law, and to a fair trial.

C) - Law n° 82 of 2002, relating to the protection of intellectual property rights. This is one of the most important laws, which now governs an equally important right, in accordance with international treaties in this area.

D) – Law n° 84 of 2002, relating to establishment of local associations and organisations. This is an essential law linked to organising the right to set up associations, and to volunteer work.

E) – Law n° 85 of 2002, on the prevention of smoking-related diseases, which is aimed at preserving the health of citizens.

F) – Law n° 86 of 2002, on the adoption of the socio-economic development plan for the first year of the 2002-2007 five-year plan mentioned at the beginning of the present report.

These two laws are based on government plans aimed at achieving socio-economic development and at working to raise the living standards of citizens, while managing State resources in such a way as to guarantee decent living conditions for all citizens.

- G) – Laws n° 149, 150, and 151 of 2002, awarding civil servants a specific allowance and salary increases. These bear witness to the desire on the part to the State to pursue its efforts to increase the income, and improve the standard of living of citizens. It falls within the framework of integrating social issues in dealing with the impact of the movement to mechanisms of a market economy.**
- H) – Law n° 156 of 2002, relating to emergency assistance funds for workers, in order to deal with cases of workers' emergencies and provide the required emergency assistance when required. This law consolidates the right to work and preserves the resources and stability of families.**

In 2003:

A) – Law n° 4 of 2003, on the system of an insurance fund and support to property acquisition financing activities. The aim of the law is to ensure that people in low-income categories have access to the financing required to allow them to obtain accommodation.

B) – Law n° 6 of 2003, amending the provisions of law n° 189 of 1951 on chambers of commerce, cancelling the stipulation that only men may vote to elect the members of the board of directors of chambers of commerce. This strengthens the principle of equality between men and women and is part of the move to abrogate discriminatory texts in Egyptian legislation.

C) – Law n° 9 of 2003, reducing notarial and registration taxes. The objective is to limit the number of disputes linked to property rights and encourage people to register title deeds with the notary public, thus contributing to the stability of immovable property and reducing the disputes in this field.

D) – Law n° 12 of 2003, promulgating a new labour code, which takes into account all rights of workers as enshrined in international and regional instruments, and instituting the right to strike.

E) – Laws n° 89, 90, and 91 of 2003, awarding civil servants a specific allowance and salary increases. These bear witness to continued efforts on the part to the State to improve the standard of living of citizens and to attain the objectives mentioned above.

F) – Law n° 94 of 2003, on the National Human Rights Council, which aims to establish an independent national mechanism working for the promotion of human rights within the framework of its attributions under the terms of the 1990 Paris principles.

G) – Law n° 95 of 2003, abolishing the State security courts and prohibiting the sentence of hard labour in addition to life imprisonment or other terms of imprisonment, in line with the international human rights treaties on the abolition of cruel punishment.

I) – Law n° 153 of 2003, raising the retirement age of magistrates from 66 to 68 years. This enables people with experience in this field to continue to make a contribution, as part of the consolidation of the right to appeal to courts and to a fair trial. It also aims at accelerating the processing of the constantly growing number of cases, in order to foster social promotion, and the establishment of a climate of security and stability.

In 2004:

A) – Law n° 3 of 2004 amending certain provisions of law n° 70 of 1964, on notarial and registration taxes. The aim is to streamline the procedures and the financial costs of registering immovable property, and to consolidate the right to own property.

B) – Law n°10 of 2004, on family courts. The intention is to facilitate and shorten the duration of court cases relating to private matters and include them in the category of conflicts arising from family relations, to be dealt with by family courts. The effect will be to speed up such cases, while making it possible to have out of court settlements through the services of family guidance and legal advice centres.

C) – Law n°11 of 2004, on the family insurance fund, which is aimed at strengthening financial assistance to families in the cases provided for under this law.

D) – Laws n° 86, 87, 88 of 2004, awarding civil servants a specific allowance and salary increases. These bear witness to continued efforts on the part to the State to improve the standard of living of citizens as indicated above.

E) – Law n°141 of 2004, passing the law on the development of small-scale enterprises, which encourages the setting up of small-scale projects to promote development, provide employment for craftsmen, and preserve national products.

F) – Law n°154 of 2004 amending certain provisions of law n° 26 of 1975, on Egyptian nationality. This law accords Egyptian nationality to children born to an Egyptian mother, in line with the right to equality between men and women.

2- REPUBLICAN DECREES

Republican decrees relating to the accession of Egypt to international and regional human rights agreements:

In 2001:

- **Republican decree n° 33 of 2001, approving accession to the African Charter on the Rights and Well-being of the Child, signed in Addis Ababa on 7/7/1990.
(The People's Assembly adopted this decree during its session on 23rd May, 2001.)**

In 2002:

- **Republican decree n° 69 of 2002, approving accession to convention n° 182 of 1999 on the prohibition and immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, adopted by the General Assembly of the International Labour Organisation on 17/06/1999.
(Official Journal n° 30 of 25th July, 2002)**
- **Republican decree n° 104 of 2002, approving accession to the optional protocol to the convention on the rights of the child, on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography, adopted in Geneva on 26/04/2002.
(The People's Assembly adopted this decree during its session on 10th July, 2001.)**

Republican decree n° 105 of 2002, approving accession to the optional protocol to the convention on the rights of the child, on the involvement of children in armed conflict, adopted in Geneva on 26/04/2002.

(The People's Assembly adopted this decree during its session on 10th July, 2001.)

- **Republican decree n° 133 of 2002, approving accession to convention on an Arab women's organisation under the framework of the Arab League.
(Official Journal n° 14 of 3rd April, 2003).**
- **Republican decree n° 297 of 2002, approving accession to the Stockholm convention on solid organic pollutants, signed in Stockholm on 22/05/2002.
(Official Journal n° 20 of 13th May, 2004).**

In 2003:

- Republican decree n° 3 of 2003, approving accession to convention n° 129 on labour inspection in agriculture, adopted in Geneva on 25/06/1969.
(Official Journal n° 34 of 21st August, 2003).

In 2004:

- Republican decree n°28 of 2004, approving accession to the Hague agreement concerning the international registration of industrial designs and models, and its enabling decree.
(Official Journal n° 29 of 15th July, 2004).

This series of laws and Republican decrees bear witness to the main trend in Egyptian legislation, which is in line with international efforts in the field of human rights, and within the framework of constitutional provisions. With its participation alongside the international community in international conventions protecting and organising the fundamental rights of citizens, Egypt has demonstrated its willingness to preserve such rights and create an enabling environment for the implementation of its development plan in the social and economic fields.

In the second part of the report, we shall take a detailed look at the objective manner in which the articles of the Charter are applied.

CHAPTER SIX: DOMESTIC REMEDIES TO ENSURE THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES, AND NATIONAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Under this point, Egypt would like to refer readers to its previous report in order to spare the time of the honourable Commission and avoid repetition.

We must emphasise that legal measures to ensure effective enjoyment of protected rights are available to citizens through the use of existing national remedies.

In this report, we shall be considering the rulings of the Superior Constitutional Court in matters relating to human rights principles; rulings on constitutional disputes brought before it, and cases in which the Court ruled on the constitutional invalidity of certain legislative texts that were in contradiction of the Constitution. We shall then move on to the national human rights mechanisms.

1- THE SUPERIOR CONSTITUTIONAL COURT

Pursuant to the powers given to it in connection with the constitutional validity of laws, the Superior Constitutional Court has issued a large number of constitutional decrees declaring the constitutional invalidity of legal texts that are in contradiction with the Constitution. Below are the decrees that fall under the period covered by this report. This point shall be further discussed in the second part, which deals with freedoms and rights.

In 2001:

- A) The decree relating to case n° 25 of the constitutional judicial year 22, session held on 5/5/2001 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of point (b) of article 17 of the law on partnerships, joint-stock companies and limited liability companies, issued by law n° 159 of 1981 and amended by law n° 3 of 1998, which stipulates that the Council of Ministers must approve the incorporation of a company whose social object is or includes the publication of newspapers" (Violation of the right to equal treatment).

- B) The decree relating to case n° 114 of the constitutional judicial year 21, session held on 2/6/2004 states “the constitutional invalidity of article 48 of the criminal code and especially in regard to the tortuous contract.” (Violation of the right to individual freedom and in accordance with the principle of penal lawfulness and the presumption of innocence.)

- C) The decree relating to case n° 123 of the constitutional judicial year 22, session held on 19/12/2001 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of paragraph one of article 105 of the law on social insurance n° 79 of 1975, which prescribes that in case of remedy at law, the proof of marriage will depend on this decision even though the claim was introduced while the husband was alive. (This condition violates the principle of equal treatment).

- D) The decree relating to case n° 107 of the constitutional judicial year 21, session held on 9/12/2001 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of article 177 of the draft bill on the private affairs of orthodox Copts" which fixes a different child custody age from that of Moslems. (Violation of the right to equal treatment).

In 2002:

A) The decree relating to case n° 6 of the constitutional judicial year 20, session held on 14/4/2002 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of the fourth paragraph of article 17 of law n° 136 of 1981 regarding certain provisions relating to the rental and sale of premises, governing the relations between lessors and lessees which do not state that the tenancy agreement entered into with non Egyptian tenants continues at the end of their residence, on behalf of their Egyptian spouse and their children, contrary to what pertains for an Egyptian tenant and his wife, when the wife is not Egyptian. (Violation of the right to equal treatment).

B) The decree relating to case n° 198 of the constitutional judicial year 20, session held on 14/14/2002 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of the last paragraph of article 8 of law 222 of 1955 which stipulates consideration for the improvement of immovable property that has been improved for common public interest and especially concerning the final nature of the decision of the appeal committees.” (Violation of the right of appeal).

C) The decree relating to case n° 326 of the constitutional judicial year 22, session held on 09/06/2002 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of article 175 of the labour code issued by law n° 137 of 1981 for the unlawful nature of the provision prescribing a reprieve for the financial fine”. (Violation of the right to equal treatment).

D) The decree relating to case n° 56 of the constitutional judicial year 22, session held on 09/06/2002 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of article 5 of law n° 652 of 1955 relating to mandatory insurance on third party liability during car accidents, which does not stipulate the effects of the insurance policies of private cars on non passengers.” (Violation of the right to equal treatment).

E) The decree relating to case n° 314 of the constitutional judicial year 23, 1) specifies “the constitutional invalidity of the second paragraph of article 26 of the law relating to agricultural cooperation issued by law n° 122 of 1980 and 2) the unlawful nature of the second paragraph of article 28 of the application decree n° 122 of 1980 issued by decree from the minister for agricultural and food safety n° 388 of 1984”. (Violation of the right of appeal) because administrative referral is stipulated for public legal entities and not for private individuals.

F) The decree relating to case n° 6 of the constitutional judicial year 24, session held on 25/08/2002 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of the first paragraph of article 19 of law n° 3 of 1987 relating to the organisation of sports professions, which stipulates that an appeal against the validity of the holding of a general meeting or the creation of a union council, must be signed by five representatives of workers who

attended the general meeting, and approved by the competent authority””. (Violation of the right of appeal).

G) The decree relating to case n° 98 of the constitutional judicial year 20, session held on 15/12/2002 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of the second paragraph of article 62 of law n° 76 of 1970 relating to the journalists’ trade union, which stipulates that an appeal against the validity of the holding of a general meeting or the creation of a journalists’ trade union, must be signed by five representatives of workers who attended the general meeting and approved by the competent authority”. (Violation of the right of appeal).

In 2003:

A) The decree relating to case n° 51 of the constitutional judicial year 22, session held on 11/05/2003 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of the first paragraph of article 80 of the law relating to fiscal tax issued by law n° 111 of 1980 which levies a relative and additional fiscal tax on the compensations to be paid by government authorities”. (Right to equal treatment regarding the benefit of indemnities without any distinction between the parties that carry out payment).

B) The decree relating to case n° 77 of the constitutional judicial year 23, session held on 11/05/2003 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of article 91 of the decree of the President of the Republic issued by law n° 49 of 1972 relating to the organisation of universities, which comprises a time condition for granting to a member of the university teaching staff special leave to accompany the spouse authorised to travel outside the country”. (Family law)

C) The decree relating to case n° 150 of the constitutional judicial year 22, session of 14/12/2003 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of article 30 of the decree of the President of the Republic issued by law n° 70 of 1964 relating to notary and advertising taxes, which stipulates the non refund of a tax collected in application of the provisions of this law, even if the interested parties did not follow the procedure for which this tax is collected”. (Right to property)

D) The decree relating to case n° 2 of the constitutional judicial year 24, session held on 14/12/2003 specifies “the constitutional invalidity 1) of clause 2 of article 106 of the law relating to social insurance issued by law n° 79 of 1975, 2) clause 4 of article 112 of the above mentioned law, which does not stipulate the right of the husband to collect the pension received by the wife in addition to his own pension received pursuant to the provisions of this law as well as the accumulation between his pension and his revenue received for the work or the profession exercised. (Violation of the right to equal treatment, the right to perceive

a salary corresponding to the work carried out and the principle of safeguarding family rights).

In 2004:

A) The decree relating to case n° 132 of the constitutional judicial year 20, session held on 08/02/2004 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of paragraph 2 of article 3 of the decree of the President of the Republic issued by law n° 73 of 1963, which terminates the research permits and mining, gypsum and white sand extraction agreements given to individuals or to the private sector, nationalises the assets used in their operation and transfers ownership of said assets to the State while stipulating that the decisions of the evaluation commissions are final and without appeal which is in contradiction with the right of appeal. (Violation of the right of appeal).

B) The decree relating to case n° 176 of the constitutional judicial year 21, session held on 08/02/2004 states “the constitutional invalidity of the first paragraph of article 4 of law n° 3 relating to the settlement of certain situations resulting from laws on agricultural reform which omitted to exempt the beneficiaries having paid the full price before promulgation of the law, the decision terminating the distribution. (Violation of the right to equal treatment and the right to property).

C) The decree relating to case n° 250 of the constitutional judicial year 23, session held on 08/02/2004 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of point 11 of the third point of the list appended to law n° 24 of 1999 pertaining to the payment of an entry tax in theatres and other places of entertainment, and the unlawful nature of clause 11 of the third point of article 17 of the application decree of the aforementioned law, taken at the decision of the minister for finance n° 765 of 1999. (Right to property added to the fact that public tax may only be established by law).

D) The decree relating to case n° 162 of the constitutional judicial year 21, session held on 07/03/2004 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of the first paragraph of article 11 of law n° 48 of 1946 relating to *wakfs* assets, which does not include any ban on returning or changing *wakfs* assets in Mosques, contrary to the church. (Violation of the right to equal treatment).

E) The decree relating to case n° 14 of the constitutional judicial year 23, session held on 04/04/2004 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of article 16 of law n° 136 of 1981 concerning certain provisions relating to the rental and sale of premises and the organisation of relations between the lessor and the lessee, which gives the right to lessees of hospitals and their outbuildings, leased furnished, to stay on the premises even after the end of the agreed period, under the conditions stipulated in the agreement. (Violation of the right to equal treatment).

F) The decree relating to case n° 109 of the constitutional judicial year 25, session held on 15/04/2004 states “the constitutional invalidity of article 5 of law n° 652 of 1955 concerning mandatory insurance for the third party liability resulting from car accidents, pertaining to the other types of non private vehicles in connection with the effect of the insurance policy on third parties and passengers, and which overlooked workers (Violation of the right to equal treatment).

All of these constitutional rulings are immediately enforceable for all State authorities. They are an illustration of the fact that the Constitution is adhered to through the Superior Constitutional Court, which is one of the existing means of local remedies, and which plays a vital role in settling constitutional disputes that are brought before it either by individuals or by the judicial authorities. This also shows that the State is determined to fulfil its commitment to the principle of sovereignty of the law and the independence of justice, thus enabling a more harmonised legal process. As the texts concerned by the rulings of the court are all amended, this also shows that the legislature respects the rulings of the constitutional court relating to legislative texts that are in contradiction of the constitution.

The number of cases brought before the Constitutional Court, whether they are accepted or rejected, is an important indication of the growing awareness about human rights issues and the attachment to the provisions of the constitution. Below is a table of the numbers of decisions and rulings emanating from this court, which ruled on cases brought before it in accordance with its attributions under the law. The table covers the period of this report as follows:

YEAR	NUMBER
2001	71
2002	107
2003	181

These figures show a gradual increase in the number of rulings and decisions emanating from the Superior Constitutional Court, sitting on disputes submitted by individuals or by the courts.

3- NATIONAL MECHANISMS FOR ENSURING THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AGREEMENTS

A- THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

The National Human Rights Council was created by virtue of law 94 of 2003. This is an independent national mechanism. The law stipulates that the Council shall have the attributes defined internationally for such bodies, in accordance with the 1990 Paris principles. The law also stipulates the role to be played by the Council in relation to complaints brought before it, and places an obligation on government authorities to provide the necessary answers and information to the Council. According to the law, the Council is obliged to draft an annual report on the human rights situation in Egypt, to be presented to the President of the Republic and to all members of Parliament. (A copy of the abovementioned law is appended to this report).

The Council was set up under the chairmanship of Dr Boutros Boutros GHALI, a most illustrious international figure, who occupied the position of Secretary-General of the United Nations in the past.

The Council is currently carrying out the tasks entrusted to it by law, through its specialised committees, also defined by law. The aim of its activities is to draft a long term plan to strengthen its role at national, regional and international levels.

B- THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON WOMEN

This Council, which was set up by Republican decree n° 90 of 2000, works to consolidate efforts by Egypt towards the promotion of women, and dealing with all the obstacles that prevent women from playing their role in society. It is in charge of the following tasks:

- Propose a general policy for society and its constitutional institutions in the area of the promotion of women, in order to enable women play their economic and social role, and mainstream women's efforts in overall development programmes.
- Draft a national plan for the promotion of women, and for resolving the difficulties facing women.
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the general policy on women and submit proposals and comments in this field to the relevant authorities.

- Give an opinion on draft bills and decisions involving women before they are submitted to the relevant authorities, and put forward bills and decisions that are likely to contribute to the promotion of women.
- Give its view on agreements relating to women.
- Represent women in international fora and organisations dealing with women's affairs.
- Create a documentation centre to collect information, data, studies and research on women, and also carry out research and studies in this area.
- Organise seminars, conferences and debates, and consider issues of interest to women.
- Organise training and education sessions on the role of women in society and on women's rights and duties.
- Publish bulletins, reports and reviews relating to the objectives and the competence of the Council.
- Consider any other matters that may be submitted to the Council by the President of the Republic.

The activities, studies and research carried out by the Council have produced many results, and some programmes are underway. The legislative authority has reacted to various draft bills either by abrogating legislative texts that infringed the principle of equality, or by passing new laws to facilitate women's access to the process of justice. The following may be cited among the most important legislative amendments: Abrogation of the condition of the male sex in the law on chambers of commerce – The law on chiefs (oumda) and elders – The right to Egyptian nationality for children born to an Egyptian mother and a foreigner – The setting up of family courts in order to facilitate access to justice in private matters – The setting up of a family insurance fund.

We shall consider the efforts deployed by the National Council in detail in the second part of this report when we comment on article 18.

C- THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON CHILDHOOD AND MOTHERHOOD

This Council was set up by Republican decree n° 54 of 1988. The decree states that the National Council is the supreme authority in charge of proposing its governing general policy. It may also adopt any decisions necessary in order to attain the objectives for which it was established. It has the following prerogatives, among others:

- Propose a general policy on childhood and motherhood.
- Draw up a draft national plan on childhood and motherhood as part of the general policy of the State to provide protection for mothers and children in various areas. In particular, the plan is to cover social, family, health, educational, cultural, and information services, as well as social protection.
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the general policy on childhood and motherhood through reports submitted to it by ministries and other bodies and parties. Provide guidelines and remove obstacles to such implementation.
- Collect available information, statistics and studies in areas dealing with mothers and children, evaluate such data and results achieved, and define to which areas they may be most beneficial.
- Propose training programmes that will contribute to better implementation of mother and child activities.
- Propose the required cultural, educational and informative programmes in order to inform and mobilise public opinion about the needs and difficulties of childhood and motherhood. Identify the ways and means of tackling such issues on the basis of sound, scientific information.
- Encourage voluntary activities, and extend the basis of such work into the field of mother and child issues.
- Cooperate with regional and international governmental and non-governmental organisations working in the field of childhood and maternity issues.
- Give its view on agreements relating to mothers and children.

- Participate in the implementation of aid and assistance agreements in this area that are presented to Egypt by foreign States and organisations.
- Adopt internal decisions and resolutions on financial, administrative and technical matters without taking government constraints into account, and publish resolutions relating to workers' matters after obtaining the view of the central body of the organisation, and the administration.

The decision stipulates that ministries, public bodies and local and public authorities shall submit to Council and the bodies that assist it, any communiqués, reports and studies relating to its activities. They must also make available to the Council and the abovementioned bodies, periodic reports on the measures taken to implement the policy, plans and programmes of the Council on mothers and children.

It further indicates that the decisions of Council are final and binding and that all ministries, public bodies and local authorities, as well as public sector institutions must implement the plans, projects and programmes that are set up by the Council, in the area of mothers and children. This is to be done in collaboration with the Council and the bodies that assist it.

We shall look at the efforts deployed by the Council in the second part of this report when we comment on article 18.

D- THE DIRECTORATE GENERAL ON HUMAN RIGHTS AFFAIRS OF THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

The Directorate General on Human Rights Affairs was established by decree of the Ministry of Justice n° 3081 of 2002. It is in charge of the following:

- Establish a data and information base on all regional and international agreements, resolutions, recommendations, and efforts, as well as the laws, decrees and legal decisions adopted by Egypt in the area of human rights.
- Represent the ministry in the human rights commissions set up within government, scientific, and academic institutions.
- Participate in drafting, and draw up the legal sections of the periodic reports of Egypt to be presented to the

commissions set up under United Nations agreements, and to regional human rights commissions.

- **Carry out legal research and studies on the compliance of domestic legislation and regulations with international human rights agreements and resolutions.**
- **Express an opinion, if required, on legislation relating to human rights.**
- **Monitor published laws, decrees, and legal decisions relating to human rights.**
- **Draft responses and legal reports relating to questions and information required by the United Nations, specialised institutions, the African Commission, or the Arab Commission on Human Rights.**
- **Represent the ministry on the statutory commissions of the United Nations and in international, regional or national seminars, conferences or commissions dealing with human rights, and prepare the necessary studies to ensure implementation of recommendations coming out of such events.**
- **Organise and hold scientific seminars and conferences on specific human rights issues.**
- **Organise and hold training sessions for magistrates and administrators, in conjunction with interested national, regional and international organisations and parties.**
- **Collect statistical indicators on areas relating to human rights from the relevant government bodies.**
- **Carry out any other missions that may be entrusted to it.**

The post of Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Justice, in charge of human rights matters was created by Republican decree n° 233 of 2003.

The high commission of the abovementioned directorate general was set up with the Under-Secretary as its chairperson, to be in charge of drafting the international reports to be submitted by Egypt to regional and international human rights mechanisms, in collaboration with the appropriate government authorities. The present report that is being presented to the honourable Commission is the fruit of the labour of that commission.

Furthermore, in conjunction with the United Nations Programme for Development, the directorate general organises training sessions for

judges and prosecutors, in order to disseminate information and educate them on regional and international human rights conventions. The directorate general has also drafted an Egyptian handbook of regional and international agreements to which Egypt is a party, as well as the laws and regulations on the existing national mechanisms. The aim of this work is to facilitate the work of magistrates because under the terms of the Egyptian constitution, such agreements are part and parcel of Egyptian law.

E- THE HIGH COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

The High Commission on human rights was established by decree of the Ministry of Interior n° 22562 of 2001. Membership of this commission includes representatives of the command structures of all the security and police bodies of the Ministry. The commission is in charge of the following:

- Identify the means of preserving human rights in the interaction and behaviour of the different agencies of the ministry and the population.
- Observe the application of procedures to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms by staff working in the various agencies under the ministry.
- Consider all obstacles that could hamper the enjoyment of rights and fundamental freedoms and find the best ways of eliminating them.
- Examine any questions relating to human rights that might arise in the country and adopt the necessary measures and make proposals that might contribute to strengthening the strategy of the ministry in the area of protecting human rights.
- Propose seminars, conferences and training sessions to be organised, with a view to developing knowledge about human rights in the staff of the ministry.
- Consider the ways and means of improving the various existing procedures in order to enhance the protection of human rights.

The commission has done considerable work towards the setting up of a mechanism to ensure respect of human rights and the protection of fundamental freedoms. It has also sought to disseminate a human rights culture within the various sectors of the ministry (officers, general staff, civilians) in order to improve the knowledge about human rights concepts and identify processes that could contribute to the well-being of citizens by providing them with rapid, modernised services. The commission also ensures that any rumours that could be prejudicial to the reputation of Egyptian security services are investigated. It monitors the quality of security, police, and legal procedures with a view to safeguarding the determined efforts made by the security institution to protect human rights and freedoms.

Thanks to the efforts of the commission, a lot has been accomplished in the different sectors of the ministry.

F- THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS

A ministerial decree, n° 41 of 01/03/2004, set up a commission made up of high-level civil servants within the Ministry of Social Affairs. The commission is in charge of drafting periodic reports on the efforts deployed by the ministry in the area of human rights. The commission is also in charge of reviewing complaints submitted to the ministry by individuals, and which relate to the infringement of the rights of certain categories of persons such as children, women, the disabled, and the elderly.

The various national and specialised government mechanisms that have been set up in the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms bear witness to the fact that Egypt is effectively implementing its international commitments resulting from the international agreements to which it is a party. This has led to the setting up of various bodies to monitor and strengthen action in the relevant areas. It has also led to the drawing up of an ambitious strategy to disseminate a human rights culture and entrench this concept in the daily life of the population through a working method, a way of life, and a vision of the future. All this can only be beneficial for humanity as a whole.

PART TWO

EFFECTIVE APPLICATION OF THE RIGHTS STIPULATED IN THE CHARTER

In this part of the report, we shall be considering the rights stipulated in the Charter in the order in which they appear in the African Charter, as indicated in the conclusions of the honourable Commission to the general guidelines on the drafting of periodic reports, and taking into account the amendment of April 1988. We shall therefore be considering the following points in detail:

CHAPTER ONE: CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

CHAPTER TWO: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS

CHAPTER THREE: RIGHTS OF FAMILIES AND OTHER SPECIAL CATEGORIES

- 1- MEASURES AIMED AT PROTECTING FAMILIES
- 2- WOMEN
- 3- CHILDREN
- 4- DISABLED PERSONS
- 5- ELDERLY PEOPLE

CHAPTER FOUR: OBSTACLES TO IMPLEMENTING THE CHARTER IN THE EXISTING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

CHAPTER FIVE: EDUCATION, AWARENESS, INFORMATION AND DISSEMINATION OF INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS AGREEMENTS

CHAPTER SIX: COOPERATION BETWEEN EGYPT AND AFRICA FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

CHAPTER ONE: CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

In this chapter, we shall be reviewing civil and political rights in the order in which they appear in the African Charter. These are the rights and freedoms set out under articles 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13.

1- RIGHT TO EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW AND NON DISCRIMINATION

Article 2 of the Charter

Every individual shall be entitled to the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms recognised and guaranteed in the present Charter without distinction of any kind such as race, ethnic group, colour, sex, language, religion, political or any other opinion, national or social origin, fortune, birth or other status.

Article 3 of the Charter

- 1- Every individual shall be equal before the law.
- 2- Every individual shall be entitled to equal protection of the law.

In its previous report, Egypt mentioned a number of constitutional and legal texts that guarantee equality and non discrimination. We would therefore refer to the same texts and supplement them in this report by indicating a number of laws and legal provisions illustrating the effective implementation of the right to equality. These are acts passed by the legislature, as well as decrees and rulings on interpretation of the constitution, handed down by the Constitutional Court over the period covered by the present report.

A) LAWS INSTITUTING THE RIGHT TO EQUALITY

- Law n° 6 of 2003, amending law n° 189 of 1951 governing elections in chambers of commerce. This law was passed to cancel the condition of gender and now allows women to participate in such elections, thus removing a legislative obstacle in their way. This law is the result of the efforts deployed by the legislative committee of the National Council on Women.
- Law n° 154 of 2004, amending the provisions of law n° 26 of 1975, on Egyptian nationality. The new law was passed to award Egyptian mothers the right to give Egyptian nationality to children born to couples of mixed nationality. This law is also the result of efforts deployed by the National council on Women, and the National Council on Childhood and Motherhood.

B) CONSTITUTIONAL DECREES INSTITUTING THE RIGHT TO EQUALITY

In 2001:

- The decree relating to case n° 25 of the constitutional judicial year 22, session held on 5/5/2001 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of point (b) of article 17 of the law on partnerships, joint-stock companies and limited liability companies, issued by law n° 159 of 1981 and amended by law n° 3 of 1998, which stipulates that the Council of Ministers must approve the incorporation of a company whose social object is or includes the publication of newspapers" (Violation of the right to equal treatment).
- The decree relating to case n° 107 of the constitutional judicial year 21, session held on 9/12/2001 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of article 177 of the draft bill on the private affairs of orthodox Copts" which fixes a different child custody age from that of Moslems. (Violation of the right to equal treatment).

In 2002:

- The decree relating to case n° 6 of the constitutional judicial year 20, session held on 14/4/2002 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of the fourth paragraph of article 17 of law n° 136 of 1981 regarding certain provisions relating to the rental and sale of premises governing the relations between lessors and lessees which do not state that the tenancy agreement entered into with non Egyptian tenants continues at the end of their residence, on behalf of their Egyptian spouse and their children, contrary to what pertains for an Egyptian tenant and his wife, when the wife is not Egyptian. (Violation of the right to equal treatment)
- The decree relating to case n° 56 of the constitutional judicial year 22, session held on 09/06/2002 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of article 5 of law n° 652 of 1955 relating to mandatory insurance on third party liability during car accidents, which does not stipulate the effects of the insurance policies of private cars on non passengers." (Violation of the right to equal treatment).
- The decree relating to case n° 326 of the constitutional judicial year 22, session held on 09/06/2002 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of article 175 of the labour code issued by law n° 137 of 1981 for the unlawful nature of the provision prescribing a reprieve for the financial fine”. (Violation of the right to equal treatment).

In 2003:

- The decree relating to case n° 2 of the constitutional judicial year 24, session held on 14/12/2003 specifies “the constitutional invalidity 1) of clause 2 of article 106 of the law relating to social insurance issued by law n° 79 of 1975, 2) clause 4 of article 112 of the above mentioned law, which does not stipulate the right of the husband to collect the pension received by the wife in addition to his own pension received pursuant to the provisions of this law as well as the accumulation between his pension and his revenue received for the work or the profession exercised. (Violation of the right to equal treatment, the right to perceive a salary corresponding to the work carried out and the principle of safeguarding family rights).

In 2004:

- The decree relating to case n° 176 of the constitutional judicial year 21, session held on 08/02/2004 states “the constitutional invalidity of the first paragraph of article 4 of law n° 3 relating to the settlement of certain situations resulting from laws on agricultural reform which omitted to exempt the beneficiaries having paid the full price before promulgation of the law, the decision terminating the distribution. (Violation of the right to equal treatment and the right to property).
- The decree relating to case n° 162 of the constitutional judicial year 21, session held on 07/03/2004 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of the first paragraph of article 11 of law n° 48 of 1946 relating to *wakfs* assets, which does not include any ban on returning or changing *wakfs* assets in Mosques, contrary to the church. (Violation of the right to equal treatment).
- The decree relating to case n° 14 of the constitutional judicial year 23, session held on 04/04/2004 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of article 16 of law n° 136 of 1981 concerning certain provisions relating to the rental and sale of premises and the organisation of relations between the lessor and the lessee, which gives the right to lessees of hospitals and their outbuildings, leased furnished, to stay on the premises even after the end of the agreed period, under the conditions stipulated in the agreement. (Violation of the right to equal treatment).
- The decree relating to case n° 109 of the constitutional judicial year 25, session held on 15/04/2004 states “the constitutional invalidity of article 5 of law n° 652 of 1955 concerning mandatory insurance for the third party liability resulting from car accidents, pertaining to the other types of non private vehicles in connection with the effect of the insurance policy on third parties and

passengers, and which overlooked workers (Violation of the right to equal treatment).

The abovementioned laws and constitutional decrees are proof of the unrestricted implementation of the principle of equality within the framework of the constitution, which also enshrines the concept of sovereignty of the law and independence of the judiciary. The principle is also applied through legal acts that cancel all texts that violate such equality, and by the rulings of the Constitutional Court, which declare any text that infringes on the principle of equality as unconstitutional.

These legislative and judicial arrangements are part of a concerted move to establish the constitutional principles of human rights and fundamental principles at the heart of a legal system that will further confirm such action. The aim is also to ensure the continued enjoyment of these freedoms through laws that provide the population with the means to demand these rights, while protecting and preserving the same.

2- RIGHT TO LIFE, RESPECT OF PHYSICAL AND MORAL INTEGRITY OF INDIVIDUALS, AND PROHIBITION OF ARBITRARY DEPRIVATION OF THESE RIGHTS

Article 4 of the Charter

Human beings are inviolable. Every human being shall be entitled to respect for his life and the integrity of his person. No one may be arbitrarily deprived of this right.

For comments on this article, please refer to the previous report by Egypt, in order to avoid repetition, and to spare the time of the honourable Commission.

3- RIGHT TO THE RESPECT OF THE DIGNITY INHERENT IN THE INDIVIDUAL, RECOGNITION OF LEGAL STATUS, PROHIBITION OF EXPLOITATION, DEGRADATION, TORTURE, AND CRUEL, INHUMAN AND DEGRADING TREATMENT

Article 5 of the Charter

Every individual shall have the right to the respect to the dignity inherent in a human being and to the recognition of his legal status. All forms of exploitation and degradation of man, particularly slavery, slave trade, torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment and treatment shall be prohibited.

Egypt would like to recall that this point was considered in its previous report, but will refer to the most recent laws passed in this area:

- Law n° 152 of 2001, amending law n° 396 of 1956, prohibiting corporal punishment in Egyptian prisons.
- Law n° 95 of 2003, prohibiting sentencing to hard labour with terms of life or other imprisonment.

These laws are part of the efforts deployed by Egypt to harmonise its legislation with international human rights agreements.

Furthermore, as part of the effective implementation of the principles, rights, and freedoms guaranteed by international conventions, Egypt would like to emphasise the considerable progress made in its criminal policy and the impact on the application of custodial sentences. Indeed the new programmes of the Ministry of Justice, relating to custodial sentences were based on the following criteria:

A) Taking into account the social dimension of prisoners, and in particular:

- Increasing the capacity of existing prisons, renovating old prisons, and creating new ones. Classify inmates according to their charges, sentences, age, and sex and set them out in different categories to be dealt with on the basis of the duration of their sentence.
- Draft appropriate rehabilitation programmes and strive to extend such programmes, given the positive results in

terms of using their capabilities. Take advantage of leisure times to introduce sporting activities and community service, in order to preserve the health of prisoners.

- Raise the living standards of prisoners and their families by developing their qualifications and training and instituting awards for work done. This will facilitate better insertion within the society.
- Apply the principle of outside visits for prisoners, in order to allow them to visit their families for periods of 48 hours, within the framework of the law and the rules and regulations of the prison.
- Apply the rules of parole whenever conditions make this possible.
- B) Total medical coverage for inmates:

Many hospitals and dispensaries have been set up and equipped with modern medical means. This has been welcomed by many visitors and human rights defenders. The penitentiary sector is currently equipped with the following medical installations:

- 24 hospitals within the prisons sector.
- 34 clinics with various specialisations, within the prison sector.
- 21 fully equipped medical centres.
- 16 x-ray rooms, equipped with modern technology.
- 6 ultra-sound units.
- 20 clinics for minor operations, and 8 operating theatres for major surgery.
- Prison hospitals have been equipped with 850 new beds.

C) Cultural services for prison inmates:

40 libraries have been created and equipped in the prison sector. The libraries have many books and useful reference works covering various fields. Inmates may borrow the book or reference work of their choice, thus enabling them to continue their studies at the different levels of education.

D) Care and custody of female prisoners:

Through its various departments, the Ministry of Interior strives to set up complementary, custom-made programmes that are appropriate for women. These include:

- **Care of female detainees at the time of arrest:**

An appropriate area must be set aside in the police station to house women until the end of the process. This process must be speeded up in order to shorten their length of stay in these places. Women must be isolated from men both during the investigation and during transfer.

- **Care of female detainees in the remand phase:**

In order to preserve their dignity (in terms of accommodation and food), the penitentiary system has set up special premises for such women. These places are distant from other detainees, and the women are held in separate rooms and allowed to wear civilian clothes if so decided by the penitentiary authorities. The authorities must take into account issues of hygiene and health in general.

- **Right to health coverage for female prisoners:**

All necessary medical services and medication are provided to detainees in the prison hospitals and in external clinics. When required, surgery is also carried out in external hospitals. Spares for equipment are also available as required.

- **Social services for female inmates:**

Particular care must be taken in dealing with female inmates. Each case must be studied closely from the social and psychological angles, looking at the factors and causes that may have led them to commit the offence. This should make it possible to select the right programme to facilitate their social reinsertion. Women must also be provided with the necessary equipment, tools, clothes, and food. Cultural, entertainment and leisure activities may be provided through the prison libraries, and by organising seminars, conferences and festivals. Those who show talent must be allowed to pursue their vocation by making the right conditions available to them.

- **Rights of pregnant women, nursing mothers, or mothers with small children:**

- Pregnant women, nursing mothers, and mothers with small children must be treated well and be provided with good medical care. They must have adequate food, activity, bedding, clothes, and rest. They may not be deprived of their prescribed food for any reason.

- A department in charge of childhood and maternity has been set up within the prison administration service in the El Kanater prison for women. The purpose of this department is to provide care for pregnant women, examine all inmates, and preserve the health of their children, as would be done for children living outside the prison.
- Children whose mothers have received long prison sentences are given specific care during the time spent with their mother in prison. They are allowed to stay with their mothers for a period of two years during which they receive all the necessary care. Mothers with small children occupy well equipped wings of the prison. A kindergarten and a children's library are planned for the El Kanater prison. The administration also takes charge of placing children in children's centres and draws up and monitors their social dossiers.
- Female inmates also have general access to the various levels of education. An overall supplementary literacy programme has been set up in the prisons, in coordination with the executive body of the general agency in charge of literacy and adult education. Furthermore, women may not be assigned any activities that do not correspond to their nature, whether it is within the prison or outside.

The right of female prisoners to communicate with the outside:

Female prisoners have the right to send out and receive mail. They also have the right to receive visits from their friends and relations, in line with established regulations. They may also pay visits outside during the time of application of their sentence, or, on the basis of laws and rulings in this matter, be maintained at home with their relations pending their return to social life.

E) Care and custody of minors and protection of the rights and freedoms of juvenile delinquents:

The Ministry of Interior has provided constant care to juvenile delinquents, in particular by the following means:

- **Recourse to the basic rules of human rights, and in particular the rights of the child:**
- Place foundling children in the nearest centres where they may receive the necessary food and care pending finalisation of legal formalities.

- Provide young detainees being held in police stations pending arraignment before the competent court with three square meals a day, similar to the meals provided to people who enrol in the armed forces and the police.
- Provide a decent place in police stations for holding young people until the end of the legal process. This process must be speeded up in order to shorten the length of time that they are held in the police station. Throughout their detention, they must be separate from adults, both during the investigation and during transfer.
- Supplement the staff of the department by recruiting men and women who have specialised in psychology and sociology, as well as the required number of sociologists to carry out the necessary social surveys on delinquent minors or those who are in danger of becoming delinquent.
- Concerning the management of inmates of the Marj correctional centres:

The Ministry of Interior, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs, has custody of juvenile delinquents held in the young people's correctional institution of Marj. This is the only institution in the Republic where custodial sentences are applied. The institution is considered as a prison for young people, where the emphasis is placed on social care. In this light, the police services work hand in hand with social services to furnish the correctional institution with all services that might be required. This may take the form of medical or social care, through the officers specialised in sociology and psychology who are appointed to the institution. They organise different sporting, cultural or artistic activities in the institution. Thanks to various workshops in the institution, they work to rehabilitate minors by teaching them a vocation that they can exercise on the outside. In addition, the police services provide an enabling environment for those inmates who wish to continue their studies, and provide them with opportunities to sit exams during special sessions organised in the *mouhafadha*. The Ministry of Social Affairs provides literacy classes to illiterate inmates, and religious seminars are organised for both Moslem and Christian inmates. The management of the institution does not subject the young people to hard labour, isolation, or corporal punishment. It ensures that each minor maintains a correspondence with their relations and visits them. Out of the income generated by the workshop, the management also gives some material reward to the young people who work in the workshop.

In collaboration with the supplementary care structure, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration and other parties, the management seeks to set up a social security allowance for

the families of its former inmates who were pushed into delinquency as a result of economic conditions. It does this by training the former inmates in training centres that fall under the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, and by paying them a monthly stipend over the training period. It also helps them find employment, through its contacts with local and other official authorities. Furthermore, the management works in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs to attempt to register minors from the institution in the various educational cycles. Accommodation is provided to those who are homeless in Ministry of Social Affairs hostels, until the end of their studies.

F) Supplementary care and protection of the rights and freedoms of former convicts:

A specialised unit of the Ministry of Interior, known as the supplementary care unit, is in charge of the following:

- **In the area of supplementary care for former convicts and their families:**

- Provide accompanying services for former inmates of prisons and detention centres, and assist them to find suitable jobs in order to have a decent life.
- Provide assistance to former convicts in surmounting the difficulties that might face them, thus enabling them to be more stable and fostering their integration within society.
- Draft a bi-annual report over the period of the first two years after their imprisonment, to assess the results of monitoring their difficulties, and propose adequate solutions.
- Prepare statistics and data on the work of the unit and transmit them to the relevant bodies within the ministry. Collect the financial assistance provided by certain government and local authorities.
- Make recommendations to the licensing authorities in the place of residence of former convicts, in order to facilitate the issuance of professional driving licenses as required.
- Assist in obtaining a cancellation of fees for the children of former convicts and prisoners, and furnish them with school uniforms and school supplies.
- Contribute to free medical coverage for former convicts and families of prisoners, the expense to be borne by the State.

- **Help former convicts and families of prisoners to obtain the authorisations required from neighbourhood or *mouhafadha* authorities to enable them exercise certain professions.**
- **Assist former convicts and families of prisoners to obtain certain basic supplies for some local authorities.**
- **In collaboration with the competent authorities, help former convicts obtain their qualification in professions that will enable them to live a decent life in society. This is reserved for people under 40 years of age.**

In addition, the assistance that is given to families of prisoners in preparation of the time when the prisoner leaves prison is suspended when the person is freed, because they then fall in the category of former convicts.

- **Work in conjunction with government authorities and the various ministries (Ministry of Social Affairs – Ministry of *Wakfs* – Ministry of Housing – Ministry of Industry – Ministry of Education – El Azhar council of Elders – El Azhar universities – local authorities – branches of the association for former detainees in all security services – local charities) to provide assistance to families of prisoners and former convicts to facilitate their reinsertion and ensure that they become good members of the society.**
- **Show an interest in the spouses and children of prisoners and provide their health, social, cultural, and material needs. This contributes to providing them with a decent life and ensuring that they are integrated within the society. It also enables them to deal with the crisis of having their sole breadwinner held in detention, and to deal with the accompanying disruption of their personal and social life.**
- **Show an interest in the parents of prisoners if they are elderly and the prisoner is their sole support, by replacing the social and humanitarian assistance that was provided by their son.**
- **Strive to increase the financial assistance or donations in kind, in order to satisfy the needs of this category of persons as much as possible. In this way, their human rights may be respected and they may be involved in the development, production self-enhancement programmes of the society.**

This is the effective role played by the State and its various organs to provide constant support to the legitimate human rights of this category of Egyptian society, in order to obtain a positive impact on the security of the nation.

4- INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY AND THE RIGHT TO A PRIVATE LIFE

Article 6 of the Charter

Every individual shall have the right to liberty and to the security of his person. No one may be deprived of his freedom except for reasons and conditions previously laid down by law. In particular, no one may be arbitrarily arrested or detained.

For comments on this article, please refer to the previous report by Egypt, in order to avoid repetition, and to spare the time of the honourable Commission.

Role of the Department of public prosecutions in preserving rights and freedoms

The department of public prosecutions is part of the judicial branch of power. It is the legal representative of society, and is in charge of the prosecution in criminal cases, in line with the criminal code of Egypt. Its staff is made up of the state attorney and deputy state attorneys, advocates general of the 1st instance, heads of public prosecutions departments, public prosecutors, and deputy and assistant public prosecutors (article 23 of the law on the judiciary).

According to the terms of the Egyptian criminal code, staff of the department of public prosecutions, from the rank of deputy public prosecutor enjoy jurisdictional immunity (article 67 of the law on the judiciary).

On the basis of the role assigned to it, the department of public prosecutions represents society in the follow up and investigation of a crime, until such time as the perpetrators have been discovered and brought to trial. It carries out this function while preserving rights and freedoms, and in this area the following must be noted:

A- The department of public prosecutions is competent to investigate complaints involving a crime, either by initiating the investigation itself, or upon the request of the examining magistrate. It may also summon suspects to appear before the competent courts. Only the department of public prosecutions has the authority to investigate criminal complaints. It makes requests to the examining magistrate, represents the prosecution before the courts, and introduces appeals, even when they are in favour of the accused. Where there is insufficient evidence, the department of public prosecutions is obliged to plead the innocence of the accused. The department must show all evidence, even when it is in favour of the accused. This is a public body that is in charge of ensuring that the law is applied.

B- The department of public prosecutions is competent to supervise the gathering of evidence. Police officers of the criminal investigation department are policemen who are assigned a mission that falls under the department of public prosecutions. The department of public prosecutions is vigilant to avoid violations of the rights of individuals and it acts within the framework of the law by ensuring the supervision and monitoring of the criminal police who are under its responsibility.

C- Since it forms part of the judiciary, under the terms of the provisions governing the attributions of the examining magistrate, the department of public prosecutions has the power to initiate an investigation in criminal or other punishable cases. Like the magistrate, its mission is to “discover the proof of a crime and draw the conclusions of the investigation in order to determine whether or not there is sufficient proof of the accusation to bring charges.”

During the investigation phase, the department of public prosecutions ensures that the accused person benefits from the right to a defence, and that their dignity is respected. It also ensures that they are protected from torture and inhuman forms of treatment. The department of public prosecutions guarantees that the right of the citizen to individual liberty is not violated, except in cases stipulated by law.

Under article 280 of the criminal code, the Egyptian legislation qualifies illegal detention or incarceration of individuals as a crime and designates the department of public prosecutions as the body to receive complaints of such crimes. Indeed, paragraph 2 of article 43 of the code of criminal procedure stipulates that a member of the staff of the department of public prosecutions shall be informed of any case of illegal detention in a place that is not meant for imprisonment. As soon as they receive the information, the officer shall go to the place of detention, investigate and order the liberation of the person who is being illegally held, and draft a report on the incident.

In order to avoid arbitrary detentions, article 36 of the code of criminal procedure stipulates that police from the criminal investigation department must immediately take the statement of accused persons. If

this statement does not show proof of their innocence, the accused must be transferred within the next 24 hours to the competent department of public prosecutions.

The department of public prosecutions must take the statement of the person within 24 hours, prior to incarcerating or freeing them.

The department of public prosecutions can only order a person to be held in remand if the person has fled, or when it appears from their statement that there is sufficient proof, and when the crime or offence is punishable by a prison sentence exceeding three months. The accused may also be held in remand when they do not have a fixed and known place of abode in Egypt and the crime is punishable by a term of imprisonment.

Furthermore, the order to remand in custody, emanating from the department of public prosecutions is only enforceable within a period of four days following the arrest of the accused person, or from the time that he is handed over to the department of public prosecutions, if he is already detained.

When it is felt necessary to extend the period of remand, the department of public prosecutions must, before the expiry of the four days, present the case to the criminal judge who will make a ruling after having heard both the prosecution and the accused.

Within the framework of the foregoing, the Attorney general has given instructions on communications received by the department of public prosecutions relating to arbitrary detentions. These instructions require that a visit be made immediately to the place of detention or incarceration, that an investigation be carried out, and that the victim be heard.

These instructions, which govern judicial activities, confirm the commitment of the department of public prosecutions to effectively enforce the law when a person is the victim of arbitrary detention or incarceration, and when a person is mistreated during the period of arbitrary detention or incarceration.

In carrying out its function of investigating crimes and offences, the department of public prosecutions is the guarantor of the right application of the constitutional and legislative principles that underpin the protection of the inviolability of the individual and their domicile. The code of criminal procedure has made provision for cases where a house-search may be carried out. It stipulates which bodies have the authority to issue a mandate for a house-search, the framework and scope of such searches, and the related appeals. In this area as well, the department of public prosecutions plays its role in protecting the inviolability of citizens and their homes because as soon as it takes over

a case, it begins by checking that the criminal police complied with the procedure for searches.

D- The department of public prosecutions is the national means of remedy to which citizens turn when they have been maltreated by an officer of the criminal police. Indeed, article 125 of the judicial instructions to courts stipulates that the staff of the department of public prosecutions shall personally investigate all accusations brought against police of the criminal investigation department in the course of, or due to the exercise of their functions, as well as outside of the exercise of their functions. According to the same instructions, such cases shall also be submitted to the Attorney general, which shows how much importance is given to them and their impact on the general interest of society.

E- The department of public prosecutions is in charge of supervising the detention areas in police stations, prisons, and other places where criminal sentences are applied. As a result, it is able to protect the individual liberties of citizens; can prevent arbitrary infringement of such liberties; protect the rights of persons who are deprived of their freedom by a court decision or ruling, and ensure that detainees are treated with all dignity.

In compliance with the provisions of the constitution and of law, judicial instructions to courts have been published, to define the objectives of inspections in detention centres as follows:

- Ensure that the orders of the department of public prosecutions and the examining magistrate (where applicable), as well as court ruling are applied in the appropriate manner.
- Ensure that persons are not detained or incarcerated without any legal reason.
- Ensure that the registers stipulated under the law are being used regularly and comply with the legal and regulatory provisions, and take whatever measures are required in case of violations.
- Receive the complaints of prisoners and review the registers and legal documents to check their conformity with existing models.

From the foregoing, and from the reading of reports of prison inspections, it appears that the department of public prosecutions, in carrying out these inspections, is seeking to detect any infringements that may exist in the prisons. It also seeks to hear the complaints of

prisoners and investigate the conditions of living and general hygiene in the various wings of the prisons and their hospitals. In hospitals, enquiries are made as to why inmates are present there and why they have injuries, when that is the case.

5- THE RIGHT TO SEEK REMEDY AT LAW

Article 7 of the Charter

- 1) Every individual shall have the right to have his cause heard. This comprises:
 - a) The right to appeal to competent national organs against acts violating his fundamental rights as recognised and guaranteed by conventions, laws, regulations and customs in force.**
 - b) The right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty by a competent court or tribunal.**
 - c) The right to defence, including the right to be defended by counsel of his choice.**
 - d) The right to be judged within a reasonable time by an impartial court or tribunal.****
- 2. No one may be condemned for an act or omission which did not constitute a legally punishable offence at the time it was committed. No penalty may be inflicted for an offence for which no provision was made at the time it was committed.**

Where the comments on this article are concerned, please refer to the constitutional and legislative principles, and the legal provisions mentioned in the previous report by Egypt, in order to spare the time of the honourable Commission. To these we would like to add the texts that have been published during the period covered by the present report.

a. LAWS ON THE RIGHT TO SEEK REMEDY AT LAW

- Passing of law n° 3 of 2002 and law n° 159 of 2003, which raises the retirement age to 68 years, in order to be able to deal with the growing number of cases and speed up their settlement.

– Passing of law n°10 of 2004, on the establishment of family courts. This would tend to shorten the duration of court cases involving family conflicts and include them in the category of conflicts arising out of family relations. This will make it possible to have out of court settlements through the services of family guidance and legal advice centres, thus contributing to greater stability in families. It will also be possible to

distinguish between these courts and others, and provide them with the means required by the people who use such courts.

b. CONSTITUTIONAL DECREES ON THE RIGHT TO SEEK REMEDY AT LAW

- The decree relating to case n° 198 of the constitutional judicial year 20, session held on 14/04/02 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of the last paragraph of article 8 of the law n° 222 of 1955 which stipulates consideration for the improvement of unmoveable assets, improved in the common interest of the public and particularly concerning the final nature of the appeals committee’s decision. (Violation of the right of appeal).
- The decree relating to case n° 6 of the constitutional judicial year 24, session held on 25/08/2002 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of the first paragraph of article 19 of law n° 3 of 1987 relating to the organisation of sports professions, which stipulates that an appeal against the validity of the holding of a general meeting or the creation of a union council, must be signed by five representatives of workers who attended the general meeting, and approved by the competent authority”. (Violation of the right of appeal).
- The decree relating to case n° 98 of the constitutional judicial year 20, session of 15/12/2002 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of the second paragraph of article 62 of law n° 76 of 1970 relating to the journalists’ trade union, which stipulates that an appeal against the validity of the holding of a general meeting or the creation of a journalists’ trade union, must be signed by five representatives of workers who attended the general meeting and approved by the competent authority”. (Violation of the right of appeal).
- The decree relating to case n° 132 of the constitutional judicial year 20, session of 08/02/04 states “the constitutional invalidity of paragraph 2 of article 3 of the decree of the President of the Republic issued by law n° 73 of 1963, which terminates the research permits and mining, gypsum and white sand extraction agreements given to individuals or to the private sector, nationalises the assets used in their operation and transfers ownership of said assets to the State while stipulating that the decisions of the evaluation commissions are final and without appeal which is in contradiction with the right of appeal. (Violation of the right of appeal).

6- FREEDOM OF WORSHIP AND THE PRACTICE OF RELIGIOUS RITES

Article 8 of the Charter

Freedom of conscience, the profession and free practice of religion shall be guaranteed. No one may, subject to law and order, be submitted to measures restricting the exercise of these freedoms.

To spare the time of the honourable Commission, Egypt would simply limit itself here to referring to its previous report, and in particular the constitutional, legislative and legal texts that protect this right and sanction violations of this freedom.

7- FREEDOM OF OPINION AND INFORMATION

Article 9 of the Charter

- 1- Every individual shall have the right to receive information.**
- 2- Every individual shall have the right to express and disseminate his opinions within the law.**

Where this article is concerned, please refer to the previous report by Egypt, in order to spare the time of the honourable Commission. We may add that law n° 82 of 2002, on the protection of intellectual property rights, was passed to govern and protect this right, in line with international conventions on the protection of the right to intellectual property.

In addition, it must be pointed out that the Superior Constitutional Court has ruled that the constitutional protection granted to private property also relates to individual and natural rights, and that this protection covers literary, artistic, and industrial property rights.

(Decree relating to case n° 34 of year 13, session held on 20/06/1994).

The Constitutional Court has also ruled on the constitutional invalidity of the law on companies, which stipulates that the Council of Ministers must approve the incorporation of a company whose social object is or includes the publication of newspapers. This decision is based on the provisions of articles 206 to 209 of the constitution, relating to the press. The reason for this is that publishing newspapers is part and parcel of other human rights and liberties, and in particular, the freedom of expression.

(Decree relating to case n° 25 of the constitutional judicial year 22, session held on 5/5/2001).

8- FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

Article 10 of the Charter

- 1- Every individual shall have the right to free association, provided that he abides by the law.**
- 2- Subject to the obligation of solidarity provided for under article 29, no one may be compelled to join an association.**

As part of the commitment of the State to implementing court rulings and ensuring that citizens enjoy the right to appeal to justice, law 153 of 1999 was the subject of a complaint for unconstitutionality. By its ruling 153 of year 21, at its session of 3/6/2000, the Superior Constitutional Court ruled that this law, which had not been submitted to the *Shoura* Assembly, and which is considered one of the supplementary laws of the constitution, is unconstitutional.

In compliance with the preceding, law n° 84 of 2002, on associations and private institutions was passed to avoid the constitutional loopholes that had been revealed by the ruling handed down by the Constitutional Court on the aforementioned law.

The new law took into account the recent developments in the activities of civil society, which has become an essential partner in overall development. Action at national level constitutes added value for society because it reflects the complementarities of such action, prepares the ground for voluntary work, and entrenches a feeling of belonging to one nation and one society.

The law introduced the following new notions:

- A) Opening up of the areas for social action, including human rights activities, as well as the freedom to work in more than one field.**
- B) Establishment of a mechanism to bring an end to conflicts within associations. One or more commissions will be set up by decree of the Ministry of Justice, to be chaired by a counsel of the appeal courts, to be nominated by the general assembly of the court. The commissions membership will be as follows:**
 - A representative of the administration, to be nominated by the minister of social affairs.**
 - A representative of the regional union, to be nominated by the board of directors of the general union.**

- A representative of the association that is a party in the conflict, to be nominated by the general assembly.

This will make it possible to settle cases out of court and avoid wasting the efforts of associations in legal and judicial processes.

C) Non-Egyptian, foreign organisations are now allowed to work in Egypt through their local branches, which will be set up under the terms of agreements prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in line with article 1 of the law. As at 17/4/2004, 31 foreign non-governmental organisations had received permission to carry out the various activities of their associations in Egypt.

D) The General Union of local Institutions and Associations.

Law 84 of 2002 provided for the setting up of a general union of local associations and institutions as a legal entity to be based in Cairo.

1- The general union of local associations and institutions has been created as a legal entity and is based in Cairo.

2- The general union is made up of local associations and institutions, as well as representative and territorial unions.

3- The board of directors is made up of 30 members, 19 of whom are elected. The chairperson of the board and 10 members, working in the area of social activities, shall be appointed by decree.

4- The term of office of the board shall be three years.

5- The board shall draft its rules of procedure, which shall outline its functions, committees, and the working rules that shall govern the organisation of its work.

E- Representative unions

The aforementioned law provides for a new type of specialised, representative union within each *mouhafadha*, in order to strengthen the networks and relations among specialised associations that are pursuing the same objective.

F- Democratic structure of associations:

- Law n° 84 of 2002 stipulates that associations shall have a board of directors whose members shall all be elected.

- An association has the right to work in whatever field it chooses.
- An association may set up dispute settlement committees made up of representative of the association, the union, and the administration, and chaired by counsel from the Ministry of Justice.
- In cases of violations of rules, the association shall not take any measures without a hearing, nor without seeking the view of the union.
- The association may accept internal donations from people of foreign or Egyptian nationality, without seeking prior agreement, but must report such donations.

G- Government efforts to provide support to the activities of local associations:

1- Financial support to associations. The total amount of subsidies paid out to associations during the 2003/2004 financial year was around 40 million pounds, which was paid to 3836 associations.

2- Management of projects under the Ministry of Social Affairs investment plan has been devolved to local associations. Such projects include service centres, hostels, training for the disabled, vocational training centres, etc.

All this has developed the capacity of associations to provide services to the population in their *mouhafadha*. In addition to this, they are also entrusted with missions on the national territory, in particular dealing with public interest projects.

Statistics on local and central associations as at February 2004

Description	Number
Number of associations established (at the time the law n° 84 of 2002 was passed) which did not fulfil all the conditions stipulated	2565
Number of associations that comply with the conditions (in line with law n° 84 of 2002)	15061
Number of recently approved associations (in line with law n° 84 of 2002)	1632
Total number of local and central associations in the various <i>mouhafadha</i>	19258

- Number of approved associations working in the area of human rights: 81, spread out in 16 *mouhafadha*.
- Number of foreign non-governmental organisations authorised to carry out their activities in Egypt: 31, as at 17/4/2004.

Social cooperatives

Laws 109 and 110 of 1975 govern consumer and production cooperatives, respectively.

Activities of consumer and production cooperatives

Consumer cooperatives	Production cooperatives
<p>Article 1 of law 109 of 1975 on cooperation in the area of consumption stipulates that this is a branch of the association sector. The cooperative works to offer its members better quality consumer services at lower prices, in line with the principles of cooperation.</p> <p>The cooperative is made up of at least ten members who are selected in their capacity as service consumers.</p> <p>Cooperatives may work in the following areas, among others:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- The environment. 2- Providing care for people with specific needs. 3- Service centres. 4- Health coverage 5- IT training. 6- Student services. 7- Domestic tourism. 8- Household services. 	<p>Article 1 of law 110 of 1975 on production cooperatives stipulates that this is a branch of the association sector. The cooperative works to organise and develop production forces in crafts and productions services to which it provides technical, economic, and administrative support.</p> <p>A production cooperative is a democratic, republican organisation that works in the following forms:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- <u>Cooperatives of craftsmen:</u> Funded by members of the producing family, who are trained in the different sectors of the Ministry of Social Affairs, in manual and environmental industries, to enable them work as independent professionals. 2- <u>Domestic economy Cooperatives:</u> Made up of members of the productive family, it is the main axis for deployment of efforts aimed at the different cottage industries. 3- <u>Food security Cooperatives:</u> Made up of members of the productive family, and is the main axis for poultry and bee farming, creation of hives, etc. 4- <u>Graduates of training and professional retraining courses, minors from rehabilitation institutions, and former convicts:</u> Training is provided in professional training centres to enable the graduates to work independently and earn a living. Minors placed in rehabilitation institutions and former convicts also receive training.

	<p style="text-align: center;">5- <u>Cooperatives of young graduates:</u></p> <p>Young graduates are encouraged to set up cooperatives among themselves along the lines of their specialisation, as a means of limiting unemployment.</p>
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With this legislative basis, it is possible to work within civil society, through local, non-profit, voluntary associations, as well as in the framework of cooperatives, which provide their members with a place to meet, in order to reduce certain consumption costs, and to take advantage of group work and services at affordable prices.

In addition, the activities in the production sector create opportunities for setting up small economic units which have been given certain privileges by law. This is in recognition of the important role that they play in providing employment and protection to craftsmen and in developing the productive capacities of families and their members. This is, of course a major contribution to improving living standards and enabling citizens to contribute actively to the well-being of their society.

9- RIGHT OF ASSEMBLY

Article 11 of the Charter

Every individual shall have the right to assemble freely with others. The exercise of this rights shall be subject only to necessary restrictions provided for by law, in particular those enacted in the interest of national security, the safety of others, health, ethics, and rights and freedoms of others.

Article 54 of the Constitution gives citizens the right to hold quiet, private meetings, without arms, These do not require prior notification. Security agents are prohibited from participating in private meetings. Public meetings, processions and groupings are also permitted, within the limits set by law.

Law 14 of 1923, on public meetings, also organises appeals concerning this right as follows:

- Article 1 stipulates that public meetings are free, in accordance with the law.
- Articles 2 to 9 stipulate that public meetings, demonstrations, and processions must be notified to the public authorities three days before they are held, under the terms and conditions provided for under the law.

Such events may however be prohibited if it appears to the authorities of the *mouhafadha* or to the police that they may lead to disturbing the public peace or security because of their objectives, or the place and time, or any other serious reason. According to the law, an appeal may be made to the Minister of Interior against the decision to prohibit such an event.

The limits set out in the law mentioned above are in conformity with those of the African Charter and international human rights agreements.

10-FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND RESIDENCE

Article 12 of the Charter

- 1- Every individual shall have the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of a State provided he abides by the law.**
- 2- Every individual shall have the right to leave any country including his own, and to return to his country. This right may only be subject to restrictions, provided for by law, for the protection of national security, law and order, public health or morality.**
- 3-Every individual shall have the right, when persecuted, to seek and obtain asylum in other countries in accordance with the law of those countries and international conventions.**
- 4- A non-national, legally admitted in the territory of a State party to the present Charter, may only be expelled from it by virtue of a decision taken in accordance with the law.**
- 5- The mass expulsion of non-nationals shall be prohibited. Mass expulsion shall be that which is aimed at national, racial, ethnic or religious groups.**

Articles 50, 51, 52, and 53 of the Egyptian constitution provide for these liberties in the following terms:

- Article 50 stipulates no citizen may be prohibited from residing in any place, and no citizen may be forced to reside in a particular place, except in cases defined by the law.**
- Article 51 stipulates that no citizen may be deported from the country or prevented from returning to it.**
- Article 52 stipulates that citizens shall have the right to permanent or temporary immigration. The law shall regulate this right and the measures and conditions of immigration and leaving the country.**
- Article 53 stipulates that the right to political asylum shall be guaranteed by the State for every foreigner persecuted for defending the peoples' interests, human rights, peace or justice. The extradition of political refugees is prohibited.**

The legislature has also provided these freedoms in the following laws:

- Law 97 of 1959 relating to passports, authorises any Egyptian to obtain a passport for the purpose of travelling outside the country or returning to the country. Only the judicial authorities or the authorities of law and order may prohibit an individual from travelling. The law makes it possible to appeal such decisions.**

- **Law 89 of 1960 on the entrance and residence of foreigners, governs the procedures and conditions for issuing and renewing residence permits. This law also stipulates that it is prohibited to refuse to issue a residence permit to a foreigner who has a specific place of abode, unless this is by decision of the minister of interior, for reasons of a threat to national security, public health, morals, or peace and order. Such a decision may only be adopted after the case has been reviewed by the competent commission for the review of cases rejected for legal reasons (N° 111 of 1983 on immigration).**

The law also stipulates the procedure for individual and group emigration, whether it is temporary or permanent.

In addition, the government deploys continued efforts to regulate the emigration procedure, by defining policies on the management of affairs of Egyptians living abroad. The aim is to develop among them, an awareness and a public spirit to support national affairs, while benefiting from their experience and skills in the various areas of production, development and strengthening of national, political, social, and economic links with the nation, and among themselves.

The government also drafts specific policy to offer educational, tourist, and economic facilities and services to Egyptians and their children living abroad, and strives to maintain the link between them and the Egyptian embassies and consulates abroad.

The relevant administration is in charge of the following:

- **Establish internal and external contacts with those authorities in charge of resolving problems and difficulties relating to Egyptians living abroad.**
- **Review the general issues relating to groups of Egyptians living in Africa and propose adequate solutions.**
- **Draft communiqués, statistics and information, as required, on Egyptians in Africa.**
- **Participate in organising the annual general conference of Egyptians living abroad and draw up studies and proposals to be submitted to the conference.**

Within this framework, Egypt has worked in cooperation in the field of labour, with three African countries and with COMESA, as well as the Africa Regional Centre for Labour Management, which is under the responsibility of the International Labour Organisation.

11- RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OF THE COUNTRY

(Article 13 of the Charter)

- 1- Every citizen shall have the right to participate freely in the government of his country, either directly or through freely chosen representatives, in accordance with the provisions of the law.
- 2- Every citizen shall have the right of access to the public service of his country.
- 3- Every individual shall have the right of access to public property and services in strict equality of all persons before the law.

1- For comments on this article, please refer to the previous report by Egypt concerning the constitutional texts and provisions that govern these rights. We may add the following:

In case n° 11 of the constitutional judicial year 13, session held on 8/7/2000, the Superior Constitutional Court decreed the constitutional invalidity of the supervision of legislative elections by non-magistrates. The ruling was published in the Official Journal N° 19a of 22/7/2000. Pursuant to this ruling, the law governing elections was amended to enable judicial staff to monitor electoral operations directly and totally:

- Law n° 13 of 2000, amending certain provisions of law n° 73 of 1956, which directly organises political rights; law n° 38 of 1972, on the People's Assembly, and law n° 120 of 1980, on the *Shoura* Assembly.
- Law n° 167 of 2000, amending certain provisions of law n° 73 of 1956, which directly organises political rights; law n° 38 of 1972, on the People's Assembly, and law n° 120 of 1980, on the *Shoura* Assembly.
- Law n° 1 of 2002, amending article 24 of law n° 73 of 1956, which directly organises political rights.

The last legislative elections took place in 2000. This was followed by elections for partial renewal of the *Shoura* Assembly in 2004, after the legislative amendments. The slogan at the time was therefore 'one judge for each ballot box'.

The aforementioned legislative amendments, which were carried out to enforce the ruling of the Superior Constitutional Court, are among the most significant changes that have taken place on the national scene in

the area of ensuring effective exercise of the right to participate in political life, and guaranteeing the integrity of elections and the fairness of election results.

The results of these elections were a significant indication of the success of women in elections, in particular in the *mouhafadha* of the southern valley.

2- Right to public service:

The legislative amendments highlighted the successes of women, who have now made their mark in several fields. Indeed, women are represented in the Superior Constitutional Court and several women commissioners have been appointed.

The number of women appointed to the agency in charge of State affairs, a judicial institution, is now 68, in the various ranks of service.

556 women work in the administrative prosecution service (a judicial institution), at various levels.

Women are also now well represented in local administration, and occupy management positions in local councils. There are also women who are university presidents.

3- Access to public property and services:

The constitutional and legislative rules, as well as the constitutional provisions mentioned above are the guarantee of total enjoyment of the right to equality, with absolutely no restrictions or distinctions of any sort.

CHAPTER TWO: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS

In this chapter, we shall be reviewing economic and social rights in the order in which they appear in the Charter. These are the rights stipulated under articles 14, 15, 16, and 17, and which relate to the right to property, work, education and culture, health, and social insurance.

1- RIGHT TO OWN PROPERTY

(Article 14 of the Charter)

The right to property shall be guaranteed. It may only be encroached upon in the interest of public need or in the general interest of the community and in accordance with the provisions of appropriate laws.

Article 34 of the Egyptian constitution stipulates that private ownership shall be safeguarded and may not be put under sequestration except in the cases specified in the law and with a judicial decision. It may not be expropriated except for the general good and against a fair compensation in accordance with the law. The right of inheritance is also guaranteed.

The law defines the procedure and cases for expropriation for the general good, as well as the means of appeal and the bases for assessing the attendant compensation.

Over the period covered by this report, some laws have been passed in the area of protecting the right to own property:

- A) Law n° 148 of 2001, instituting the law on funding of property acquisition. This constitutes the legal framework required for regulating the problem of financing for property acquisition, and removes the obstacles related to the right to housing.
- B) Law n° 82 of 2002, relating to the protection of intellectual property rights. This an important law, which now defines this substantial right, in accordance with international treaties in this area.
- C) Law n° 4 of 2003, on the system of an insurance fund and support to property acquisition financing activities. The aim of the law is to ensure that people in low-income categories have access to

the financing required to allow them to obtain accommodation.

- D) Law n° 9 of 2003, reducing notarial and registration taxes. The objective is to limit the number of disputes linked to property rights and encourage people to register title deeds with the notary, thus contributing to the stability of immoveable property and reducing the disputes in this field.

Legal applications:

- The Superior Constitutional Court has interpreted article 34 of the Constitution, which guarantees the right to property, and considers that this is part of individual and natural rights. It extends to financial property, which no distinction whatsoever, because they constitute the right to literary, cultural or industrial property. These individual rights are thus protected by the constitution. (Ruling handed down in case n° 34 K, session held on 4/6/1994).
- The Court has stated the constitutional invalidity of the legislative texts allowing the property of persons placed under surveillance by virtue of the law on the state of emergency to be transferred to the State. It considers that they are a breach of article 34 of the constitution, and affect private property, which is protected by law. (Case n° 5 of constitutional judicial year 1, session held on 16/05/1981).
- The Court has stated the constitutional invalidity of article 2 of law n° 134 of 1964, and article 5 of law 49 of 1971, which set the ceiling for compensation to be paid to people who have been expropriated. It considers that they violate articles 34 and 36 of the constitution, which guarantee private property. (Case n° 1 of constitutional year 1, session held on 2/3/1985, and case n° 8 of constitutional year 8, session held on 07/03/1992).
- The Court has stated the constitutional invalidity of article 55 of the law on defence, n° 17 of 1983, which prohibits a lawyer or his heirs from leasing their chambers to people of other professions than that of lawyer. It considers that this is a violation of the private property rights guaranteed by articles 32 and 34 of the constitution (Case n° 25 of constitutional year 11, session held on 27/05/1992).
- The Court has stated the constitutional invalidity of paragraph 1 of article 208a (A) of the code of criminal procedure, and abrogated its paragraphs 2 and 3, as well as article 208a (B). They are found in violation of articles 33, 34

and 40 of the constitution, which guarantee the right to property. Indeed, these provisions stipulate that the attorney general shall decide to impose surveillance on financial property, simply on the basis of the fact that sufficient evidence has been shown to support indictment. (Case n° 26 of constitutional year 12, session held on 05/10/1996).

- The Court has stated the constitutional invalidity of article 1 of law n° 521 of 1955, which confers upon the Minister of Education the right to confiscate land that is required by the Ministry of Education and teaching institutions. Indeed, since such confiscation is inappropriate and depends on the assessment of the administration, it violates the right to own property and articles 32, 34, 64, and 65 of the constitution (Case n° 5 of constitutional year 18, session held on 01/02/1997).
- The Court has stated the constitutional invalidity of clause E, article 1 of law n° 95 of 1945, relating to logistics, which authorises the confiscation of any landed property, and the mobilisation of any individual, to carry out work for an undetermined period of time. This violates the right to work and the right to property, and in particular articles 13, 32, 34, and 40 of the constitution (Case n° 108 of constitutional year 18, session held on 01/09/1997).

In this report, Egypt would like to add mention of the following new provisions on the right to property:

- The decision in case n° 150 of the I constitutional judicial year 22, session held on 14/12/2003, stated the constitutional invalidity of article 30 of the decree of the President of the Republic, issued by law n° 70 of 1964, relating to notary and advertising taxes, which stipulates the non refund of a tax collected in application of the terms of this, even if the interested parties did not follow the procedure for which this tax is collected. (Right to property).

All these laws and court rulings bear witness to the fact that Egyptian legislation does safeguard the right to property. They further illustrate the determination to entrench this right and to create mechanisms that can extend the property base and facilitate the links that will foster overall development and attainment of the objectives set by government, by increasing growth rate and improving the standard of living of the population.

2) RIGHT TO WORK

(Article 15 of the Charter)

Every individual shall have the right to work under equitable and satisfactory conditions, and shall receive equal pay for equal work.

- The Egyptian constitution of 1971 stipulates the right to work, in line with the vision of Egyptian society, and in accordance with the decisions of the international community in general and in particular with regional and international human rights conventions, as well as the conventions of the International Labour Organisation and the Arab Labour Organisation.

- For comments on this article, please refer to the previous report of Egypt, with the addition of the following new legislative provisions:

Law n° 12 of 2003, which was passed within the framework of regulating labour law and protecting workers. The Egyptian legislation undertakes to apply the regional and international conventions on the right to work, to which Egypt has acceded. This law supports the principle of collective bargaining agreements and the drafting of common work contracts. It adopts the term of employers' organisations, in order to highlight the participation of the private sector and take into account the multiplicity of these organisations, as well as the existence of businessmen's associations. These are legal entities that represent employers alongside the union of industries and chambers of commerce.

The law enshrines many provisions that guarantee the financial stability of workers. For example, article 3 sets up a transitional measure that assigns workers an annual bonus of at least 7%, pending a decision by the national council on wages that will regulate such bonuses. For its part, article 4 preserves the right of workers to continue to receive any salaries or benefits guaranteed by laws, regulations, or internal decisions in force before the new law was passed.

Concerning individual working relations, the first part of the law, which deals with employment, provides for the setting up of a high commission for labour planning in the country, and abroad. The law also gives the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration the responsibility of defining a general policy for the employment of non-organised labour, in coordination with the relevant ministries and the general congress of workers' unions.

For this reason, the law places the transfer of workers abroad under the responsibility of the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, other ministries, public bodies and companies, and the general congress of workers' unions. This task is to be carried out through the creation of employment services in the regions involved, on the basis of an attestation issued by the competent authorities, and on condition that their services be provided free of charge to workers. (These provisions are in accordance with convention n° 88 of the International Labour Organisation). In addition, subject to receiving authorisation from the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, the law allows private corporations or limited liability companies to transfer Egyptian employees abroad. In exchange, they must pay administrative charges that are set at a maximum of 2% of the salary of the worker being transferred abroad, but only for the first year of employment.

Concerning employment of foreigners, the law regulates this activity in such a way as to protect the national labour force, while enabling the different sectors to have access to experience that is not available on the national labour market. Under the terms of the law, foreigners wishing to work in Egypt are first obliged to obtain a work permit. The Ministry of Manpower and Emigration is also entrusted with the task of drafting a text specifying which professions, positions, and occupations are forbidden to foreigners.

A- Wages:

The law provides for the setting up of a national council on wages, to be created by decree of the president of the council of ministers. The council is to be chaired by the Minister of Planning and its membership is made up in equal parts of representatives appointed for their skills and experience, and representatives of employers' and workers' organisations. The council is in charge of setting a national minimum wage, taking into account minimum essential expenditure.

B)- Leave:

- The total duration of annual paid leave is 21 days, for any person who has worked for a full year. This increases to 30 days for people who have worked 10 years for the same employer.
- Workers over 50 years of age are entitled to 45 days paid leave per year. Public and bank holidays, official celebrations, and weekends are not counted as part of the leave period.
- When an employee has worked for less than a year, paid leave is calculated on the basis of the actual time worked, on condition that the person has worked for at least six months in the service of the employer.

- The length of annual leave is increased by seven days for workers who are employed in strenuous or dangerous work, or work that is harmful to health, and for those working in remote areas.
- Any worker who has concluded a full year of service with an employer is entitled to paid annual leave of at least six working days. This period is increased to 12 days for people under the age of 16, including trainees.

C) Dispute settlement procedure:

The law also sets out a new procedure for settling disputes that might arise as a result of interpretation of its provisions. This is the five-member commission indicated by the law. Among the members of the commission, which is to be set up by decree of the Ministry of Justice, are two magistrates, one of whom chairs the body. The commission will be in charge of reviewing disputes that are brought before it by employees or by employers, in particular dealing with dismissals, termination of contract or striking off from a register, and the attendant restitution, compensation, or salaries to be paid.

The law sets specific deadlines for the commission to settle such disputes. Concerning a request for dismissal of an employee, the commission has 15 days from the first session, to hand down its decision. The decision in this case is final. If the request of the employer is rejected, he/she is obliged to retain the employee and to pay them what is owed to them. If the employer does not implement the decision to rehire the worker, the dismissal is considered improper, and compensation must be paid. An appeal against this decision may be lodged with the competent appeal court, because the decision of the commission is considered as a ruling handed down by a court of first instance.

Article 85 of the law allows the employer to ask the employee to work in exceptional cases, on rest days, if this work is aimed at handling an extraordinary workload. In this case, the employee is entitled to double wages and to another rest day within the week that follows the rest day on which they worked. This provision is in line with the exceptions set out in convention n°14 of the International Labour Organisation, relating to suspension or diminution of rest days. It also complies with convention n° 106 on the organisation of work. This convention allows the decision-making authority to make temporary, partial or total exceptions to the obligation to award rest periods in precise cases, including the case of abnormal pressure of work. The condition is that the employees involved be given compensatory rest periods of a total of at least one weekly rest period of 24 hours (article 8, 3 of the convention). The law extends the provisions of article 9 of the abovementioned convention n° 106, which stipulates that there shall be

no reduction of incomes of as a result of measure taken to grant a weekly rest period. This provision is now a general principle, applicable to all workers. The list of weekly and supplementary rest periods for each employee must be communicated to the relevant administrative authority, along with any amendment, at least one week before its application (article 86). This is in line with article 7 of convention n° 14, as well as paragraph 1 of article 10 of convention n° 106.

The second part of the law deals with employment of women. Here, the legislator has opted for the principle of parity in applying the provisions of the labour code without any distinction of sex among those who work under the same conditions (article 88). A number of provisions have been drafted in relation to employment of women, on the basis of rules that tend to protect women, taking into account women's work, their attachment to the family and their spouse, as well as maternity. Article 89 stipulates that the minister shall issue a decree in which cases and activities, and at what time it is forbidden to employ women for night work, between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. This is in line with the international conventions governing women's work within the framework of the International Labour Organisation.

The law also provides that the relevant minister shall issue a decree defining those activities that are harmful to health and morals, as well as the strenuous tasks that are prohibited for women (article 95). The enabling texts of this law have defined special leave periods for working women, in particular maternity leave (90 days, with an allowance that is equal to the salary) if the worker has been employed for at least ten months; breaks for breastfeeding (two breaks of at least thirty minutes each, per day); parental leave in establishments that employ at least 50 people, and the establishment of day care centres in establishments that employ more than 100 workers.

Where children are concerned, employment of children is prohibited by law before the end of basic education, or the age of 14 years. Children may not be employed for more than six hours a day. In any case, children shall not be employed for work between 8 p.m. and 7 a.m., in line with the conventions and resolutions of the International and Arab Labour Organisations, and in recognition of the number of years of obligatory schooling.

D) Termination of employment:

Following the recommendations of the international labour convention, n° 158 of 1982, article 120 includes some examples that do not constitute valid reasons for terminating employment. These include union membership or participation in union activities; acting or having acted in the capacity of, a workers' representative; the filing of a complaint or the participation in proceedings against an employer; colour, sex, religion, or political opinion; confiscation of employee's property by the employer, and absence from work during leave. These

provisions are in conformity with international labour standards as set out in international labour convention n° 35, on the protection of, and facilities accorded to workers' representatives in institutions.

E) Professional training and orientation:

The competent ministry is obliged by law to draft national professional training and orientation policies, to prepare policies on orientation, professional training, professional advancement, and to adopt plans and programmes for implementing such policies through various activities. The ministry also has responsibility for coordinating such activities and monitoring the attainment of objectives set in the 25 training centres in the various *mouhafadha* of the Republic.

This monitoring activity is also extended to the employment bureaux in charge of verifying the implementation of the provisions of the law in the various parts of the Republic through the 612 bureaux set up in the 82 regions.

F) Collective labour relations:

Consultation and cooperation:

The law includes a provision setting up an advisory body on employment. Its membership is made up in equal parts of representatives appointed for their skills and experience, and representatives of employers' and workers' organisations, selected by their organisations. This body shall be the forum for tripartite negotiations on all labour issues. Among other things, it is in charge of promoting the implementation of international labour standards.

G) Collective bargaining:

The law also extends the framework of collective bargaining agreements. Importance and priority are thus given to collective bargaining between workers' organisations and employers, and the collective work agreements that result from such bargaining. A general legal framework has thus been set up under articles 147 to 167 of the law, to improve working conditions, resolve disputes between workers and employers, and ensure that these two parties cooperate to achieve the socio-economic objectives of businesses.

H) Collective labour conflicts:

The law institutes a new system that is unprecedented in past labour systems. This is the system of mediation (beginning at article 170). For the first time, the law has adopted an optional system of arbitration, in line with the provisions of the constitution. If both parties, or one of them, reject the recommendations made by the mediator, each may request the competent administration to adopt the necessary measures for arbitration.

I) Organisation of the right to go on strike:

The law stipulates the right to strike. It defines the measures that must be taken if workers intend to go on strike.

Under the terms of the law, the employer may close down the business partly or totally, or reduce the volume of activity by reducing the number of workers, if necessary. Nevertheless, the law prohibits the employer from requesting total or partial closure of the business, or from reducing the volume of activity during the mediation or arbitration phase. During the same period, workers are prohibited from going on strike.

J) Workers' emergency assistance fund:

The law provides for the setting up of a workers' emergency assistance fund as a public legal entity, under the responsibility of the ministry in charge of manpower and emigration, in order to compensate for the right of closure that is accorded to employers.

K) Occupational safety and health, and security in the work environment:

The law provides for the creation of a national institute for occupational safety and health, and security in the work environment. This council is to be chaired by the Minister for Manpower and Emigration, who has competence in these areas. Its membership is made up in equal parts of representatives of employers' organisations and of the general congress of workers' unions, and of people with experience in the field of occupational safety and health, and security in the work environment. The institute is in charge of defining general policy in these areas and proposing the necessary measures to ensure implementation of such policy.

The law also provides for the setting up of a tripartite consultative body on occupational safety and health in the various *mouhafadha*.

L) Labour inspectorate:

The law sets up a system of labour inspection for all businesses that are governed by its provisions, regardless of their area of activity. The inspectorate is made up of civil servants who have the quality of investigative police officers. Their mission is to verify the application of the law.

In addition to the general system of labour inspection, the law stipulates that the competent administration shall set up a specialised body in charge of inspecting all private and public companies that are governed by the provisions relating to professional safety and health, and security in the work environment. Inspections shall be carried out regularly. Inspection staff must have the appropriate skills and experience. Special, high quality training programmes, as well as testing equipment, and all necessary means must be made available to such staff to enable them to be aware of the dangers of the working environment.

Enforcement of the law in the area of employment of children:

The Ministry of Manpower and Emigration is in charge of enforcing the law in all sectors, both formal and non-formal. It takes the necessary legal steps against violators. It also provides training to children in the training centres that are under its responsibility, in order to assist them in selecting the professions that are most suited to them, within the framework of the law governing employment of children.

Workers' emergency assistance fund:

As part of its desire to protect workers against the threats that they face in their professional life, the government passed law 156 of 2002, setting up an emergency assistance fund for workers. This constitutes some insurance against unemployment and other threats facing workers. Under the terms of this law, the new labour code provides for the creation of the fund.

The fund is created with the purpose of assisting workers who may no longer receive salaries that are due to them from companies, irrespective of the number of employees, and which have totally or partially closed down, or reduced the number of staff. Payment from the fund is subject to the condition that the suspension of salaries does not entitle the worker to unemployment benefits under the terms of law n° 79 of 1975 on social insurance.

The resources of the fund are made of the following:

- Contributions from companies, representing 1% of the basic wages of workers in public sector companies, public sector service companies, and private sector companies that employ more than 30 people.
- Aid, grants, and donations, received by the board of directors of the fund, in line with existing rules.
- Fines levied for violations of the provisions of the present law.
- Income accruing from investment of the money in the fund.

The government has also made provision for Egyptian migrants through the setting up of a specialised mechanism under the auspices of the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, in charge of drafting policies on the management of affairs of Egyptians living abroad. The aim is to develop among them, an awareness and a public spirit to support national affairs, while benefiting from their experience and skills in the various areas of production, development and strengthening of national, political, social, and economic links with the nation, and among themselves.

The government also drafts specific policy to offer educational, tourist, and economic facilities and services to Egyptians and their children living abroad, and strives to maintain the link between them and the Egyptian embassies and consulates abroad

Statistical indicators:

Number of trade unions in Egypt	1 621
Number of elected officials on the board	120 514
Number of members of public associations	3 207 137

During the period covered by the present report, over one million job opportunities were made available as a result of the inflow of investors, and the start up in Egypt of large-scale projects for the creation of a new valley, the Toshki project. The number of workers has increased as indicated in the table below:

YEAR	NUMBER OF WORKERS (MILLIONS)
1994/1995	14,879
1995/1996	15,340
1996/1997	16,355
1997/1998	16,955
2001/2002	18,00
2002/2003	18,2

The data in the table above is proof of the success of plans and programmes aimed at providing employment for the workforce, reducing unemployment, and providing opportunities for regular employment. In the fourth part of this report, we shall be looking at the efforts deployed in order to confront the obstacles lying in the way of effective implementation of the Charter.

3) RIGHT TO HEALTH AND THE AIDS CONTROL PROGRAMME

(Article 16 of the Charter)

- 1- Every individual shall have the right to enjoy the best attainable state of physical and mental health.**
- 2- States parties to the present Charter shall take the necessary measures to protect the health of their people and to ensure that they receive medical attention when they are sick.**

Concerning the constitutional and legislative aspects relating to the enjoyment of the right to health care, Egypt would like to refer readers to its previous report and add comments on the implementation of a number of plans and programmes aimed at providing health care to the population. Emphasis will be placed on the practical progress made in the area.

We shall first consider health care in general, before moving on to review the AIDS control programme and the system of health insurance.

A. Health care:

The State contributes to the health care system in Egypt and is considered the main provider of health care. The system is organised through the Ministry of Health, and the bodies and authorities that fall under its responsibility. These include:

- **General health services.**
- **Prevention services.**
- **Emergency services.**

General health services:

These services are dispensed through hospitals and specialised centres that have been established and furnished with the most up to date means and equipment. They are thus able to provide top quality care for treating diseases and for surgical operations.

These general services are available in all hospitals, in addition to the teaching hospitals that fall under the authority of the universities.

The complementarities between first aid services and general health services have had a significant impact on improving the level of care and services. This has obviously contributed to improving the general health situation.

Prevention services:

Prevention is the first line of defence against many of the health problems that affect the population such as endemic diseases like bilharzia, malaria, and yellow fever, as well as communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, and environmental diseases due to pollution in the air and drinking water. Prevention is carried out through a broad network of primary care units and centres spread out through all parts of the country, in urban and rural areas. The ministry has developed and increased the service provision channels in such a way as to reach the most remote and underprivileged areas.

It has thus planned a nationwide prevention programme to control bilharzia, elephantiasis, and malaria.

The government has also developed a quarantine system in order to protect the health of the population and guarantee the security of food products that are imported from abroad. It also plays an important role in preventing contamination by travellers coming from abroad, in particular in relation to diseases that have spread in recent times, such as the deadly SARS disease, and bird flu.

As part of general health services, the State has adopted a strategy of family medicine as one of the objectives of the health reform programme. This strategy is based on the principle that the family doctor must provide all first line health care.

The strategy was first applied in 1200 units where the target families and people had been identified. The houses were numbered, family dossiers were created, and the people all underwent a thorough examination. The programme was subsequently extended to all the *mouhafadha* in Egypt.

Emergency services:

Blood banks have been established and equipped with modern means, in order to provide sound blood as required for cases needing transfusion.

In addition, emergency services have been developed, and the extension of the motorway network has had a real impact on the transfer of injured persons. An airborne emergency service also contribute significantly to providing rapid emergency services to the injured in remote areas.

The number of emergency centres, branches, and service points increased from 394 in 2001, to 404 in 2003, while emergency departments went from 29 in 2001 to 43 in 2003.

The State is desirous of providing good health coverage to the population and therefore government bears the cost of travelling abroad

for certain cases that cannot be treated in the country, or where the cost would be too high if treatment were provided in Egypt.

In addition, the Ministry of Health and the Population ensures that almost 80% of drugs used are produced in the country, while those that are not produced locally may be imported. The government also subsidises essential drugs, and drugs used against endemic diseases are made available to the population at reduced prices.

B- National AIDS control programme:

Egypt is one of the countries that is least affected by AIDS. The contamination rate is less than 2 per million inhabitants/year, according to the reports of the World Health Organisation and the United Nations AIDS programme, published in 2002. These figures show that Egypt is among the countries least affected by AIDS.

The spread of infection by HIV/AIDS is nevertheless one of the health problems that Egypt must tackle, just like other countries on the globe. This is because certain factors exist, which could lead to contamination and the spread of the disease in Egypt. Among these factors, we may cite haemophiliacs, who often need blood transfusions, as well as certain dangerous practices such as drug consumption.

Development of AIDS as at end of June 2004:

- (991) cases of HIV/AIDS + 415 cases that had developed symptoms.
- (712)
- (694)

Women represent 17% of affected people, and 63% of AIDS patients are aged between 20 and 30 years.

National strategy for the control of HIV/AIDS:

The first case of AIDS in Egypt was identified in November 1986, when the national AIDS control programme was launched. At the same time, a high commission on AIDS control was set up, under the chairmanship of the minister of health. The commission was made up of representatives of various ministries and departments, university professors, and specialists from the ministry of health. The following strategy was implemented:

- Emergency plan implemented in 1986/87.
- Overall intermediary plan implemented in 1990/91.
- First intermediary plan implemented in 1992/92.
- Second intermediary plan implemented in 1994/95.
- Plan of cooperation with the UN AIDS programme, 1996/2000.

- Plan of cooperation with the UN AIDS programme, 2001/2005.

Objectives of the AIDS control programme:

- Prevent the transmission of HIV/AIDS.
- Reduce the rate of contamination and deaths caused by HIV/AIDS.
- Reduce the instances of contamination through sexually transmitted diseases.

Specific objectives:

- Ensure epidemiological screening for HIV/AIDS in the most exposed categories of society.
- Increase awareness within the population, in particular with young people, about HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases.
- Assess the information about HIV/AIDS, and the means of prevention available to the population.
- Analyse all blood pouches before they are used for transfusion.
- Ensure the implementation of safety and control measures to fight against contamination in health structures.
- Guarantee the quality and reliability of tests that are carried out in laboratories and blood banks.
- Provide psychological counselling to people living with HIV/AIDS and their families.
- Provide annual training to all staff in training centres and organise facilitation sessions in the *mouhafadha* for members of the psychological and health counselling teams.
- Provide hospital laboratories with the necessary equipment for carrying out tests and for diagnosis.

Strategies:

- Identify the those categories of the population that are most vulnerable to the disease and measure the prevalence rate among them in order to assess the situation and trends in HIV/AIDS.
- Provide health education to the different categories and educate the public on the different modes of transmission, and on the prevention of HIV/AIDS.
- Prevent transmission through blood by analysing all blood samples before they are given to patients.
- Prevent transmission through sexual relations by using all the means of information and communication.
- Prevent mother-to-child transmission by taking a census of all married women of childbearing age.
- Reduce the impact of AIDS on citizens and the community by providing care to patients, and by giving them and their families psychological, health, and social counselling.

Activities of the national AIDS control programme:

- In the area of testing for the disease:

- A programme of epidemiological screening has made it possible to analyse over 2 million blood samples since 1986. These samples came from groups of people who are more or less exposed to the disease, such as
 - People working in tourism, who are regularly tested for AIDS in the different regions.
 - Patients who come to doctors' offices that specialise in STDs.
 - Pregnant women who receive ante-natal care in childhood and maternity centres.
 - Drug addicts who are undergoing treatment in specialised centres.
 - Prison inmates.
 - Haemophiliacs, and people who need dialysis.
 - People arrested for vice offences.
 - People whose diagnosis appear to be related to HIV/AIDS.
 - People working abroad.
 - People who come for voluntary testing.
- The results of the epidemiological screening programme show that Egypt is among the countries least affected by HIV/AIDS.

- In the area of guaranteeing the reliability of blood, and increasing the skills of people carrying out tests:

- Each year, more than 750 thousand pouches of blood are analysed in all the private and public blood banks. The operating strategy of the blood banks was modernised in collaboration with the Swiss government, through the establishment of a National Blood Bank, and 30 secondary blood banks in the various *mouhafadha*. These banks are all connected to a modern communications network, in order to be able to respond rapidly to the needs of patients who require dialysis.

- Prohibit the delivery of blood components and derivatives if it has not been ascertained that they are free of HIV/AIDS, and hepatitis B and C.
- The central laboratory of the ministry and the laboratories of the *mouhafadha* have been equipped with instruments for analysis and for confirming analyses.
- All 240 blood banks have been furnished with the tools and the products required to carry out tests.
- All the blood banks under the ministries of Health, Defence, and Interior, as well as the blood banks that are run by local and private associations and the teaching hospital work together to guarantee the reliability of blood. They also train staff on testing, in collaboration with the directorate general on blood banks, of the Ministry of Health.
- Measures are adopted to prevent transmission in dialysis centres and blood banks, in order to guarantee that a patient is only given blood after the blood has been tested, and after it has been ascertained that the blood does not carry any diseases that are transmitted through blood.
- Guarantee the reliability of transfusions, oversee the control procedure, facilitate the supervision and monitoring of transfusion centres, oblige all public and private blood banks to keep a log of blood donors, define the responsibilities in terms of testing and registration in the blood banks, and report any breaches or lapses to the authorities in charge of investigating such acts.
- Prohibit payment for blood donation.

- In the area of preventing transmission of HIV/AIDS through the use of contaminated instruments:

- Generalise the use of single-use, plastic syringes in all hospitals.
- Set up a commission on safety and the control of contamination, in all hospitals.
- Undertake to provide sterilisation equipment in all dental clinics within the public and the private sector.
- Set up guidelines for the safety of staff of laboratories, blood banks, and dental clinics.

- The Ministry of Health carries out inspections of all private sector medical establishments, to verify the enforcement of medical rules for the control of AIDS.

- In the area of care for patients, and health, psychological, and social counselling:

- Seven doctors have been trained abroad on the care of people living with HIV/AIDS, in collaboration with WHO.
- Train 700 doctors and nurses in all the *mouhafadha* in order to enable them provide care for patients, counsel them, and lighten the burden of their suffering, and provide them with social services, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs, as well as local associations.
- A team has been trained in each *mouhafadha* to provide health, psychological, and social counselling to AIDS patients and their entourage.
- Provide social services for AIDS patients in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs, and local associations.
- Propose optional screening in the laboratories of the Ministry of Health in the *mouhafadha*, and in the 120 private laboratories in the Greater Cairo area, as well as in those *mouhafadha* that have the means for testing. This service should go hand in hand with counselling and advice.

In the area of health education and raising awareness of the population:

- Print and distribute over one million brochures, posters, leaflets, and adverts to all categories of the population such as school children and university students, members of professional unions, the media, tourism sector workers, women, medical personnel, and people living with HIV/AIDS. All these publications contained basic information about HIV/AIDS, prevention, and relations with people living with HIV/AIDS.
- Thousands of seminars and working sessions have been held in sports clubs and meeting places of young people, tourism sector workers, media representatives, students of the film institute, students, school children, sociologists, jurists, and Islamic and Christian religious scholars.
- Many activities have been targeted at students and school children in the *mouhafadha*, to educate them on HIV/AIDS, and to include AIDS control in the activities of students.
- Implement education programmes for middle and secondary school children in the various *mouhafadha*. To this end, a

simplified brochure containing important information on AIDS was prepared and distributed to these students.

- A programme of information targeted at university students was launched in 60 faculties and institutions of higher learning, to raise awareness about AIDS and its prevention. The programme includes informative talks for students, as well as quizzes to test their knowledge in this area.
- AIDS control has been included in school curricula, in collaboration with the curriculum development centre of the Ministry of Education.
- An awareness programme was also implemented for factory workers in the industrial cities of Mahala El Koubra, 6th October, 10 Ramadan, Kafr Edouar, and Chabra Elkhima. Brochures on AIDS in the workplace were produced and distributed, spouses were trained, and information seminars were organised for the workers.
- For workers in the tourism sector, 20 000 brochures were produced and distributed, as part of the awareness raising campaign. In addition to this, spouses were trained, and information seminars were organised in tourist establishments.
- Women's groups have also been a target of sensitisation efforts, in order to encourage them to be involved in AIDS control in the ten *mouhafadha*. The programme includes training and education for 3000 women's groups in rural and urban areas.
- 40 programmes have been broadcast on national and local television channels. Many of these were aimed at young people and women. There have also been competitions that are an indirect way of educating young people. The first television channel broadcast four documentary films on AIDS, while the second channel broadcast feature films based on real life events. These were followed by debate and advice on the prevention of HIV/AIDS. Ten television adverts on the subject have also been recorded, and six have already been broadcast.
- Billboards on AIDS control have been displayed on public vehicles and in public areas in the Greater Cairo area, as well as in the EL ANFAQ metro station.
- The first conference on HIV/AIDS was held in Cairo on 29th and 30th April 1997, with the participation of WHO, UNICEF, the Ford Foundation, and the United Nations AIDS programme. The conference brought together 350 participants from all ministries, non-governmental organisations and bodies, Islamic and Christian religious scholars, and university professors. Numerous media people, and representatives of national and party press organs also attended the conference. The conference discussed many medical and social studies and research in the field of AIDS control.
- The second conference on AIDS was held in Egypt on 25th and 26th November 1999, with the participation of 250 people from various ministries, institutions, NGOs, and universities. Many media people, and representatives of national and party press

organs also attended this conference. Participants all discussed research on AIDS.

- The AIDS orientation centre and hotline were set up in 1996. This centre is the first of its kind in Arab and Middle Eastern countries. The centre provides citizens with all information about HIV/AIDS, the places for testing, and the care and counselling available to patients and their families. It provides socio-psychological and medical orientation, and advises those categories of the population that are most at risk from the disease. A system of correspondence has been created so that doctors, media representatives, and all those involved in AIDS control can be informed regularly of latest developments in this field. People living with HIV/AIDS and their families also receive support through the hotline, which can also direct them to the appropriate bodies to receive care and support.

Cooperation with local sectors and organisations:

HIV/AIDS is a health problem that falls under the responsibility of the health authorities. This disease does however have a number of social and psychological implications that require the involvement of all sectors of the society, and in particular NGOs, which have close relations in sectors that may be difficult for the State to reach, such as people whose lifestyle puts them at risk.

Egypt is aware of the importance of cooperation and coordination between the public authorities and the private sector in order to carry out all AIDS prevention and control activities, and raise awareness with the various sectors of society, in particular young people in schools and universities. **This cooperation covers the following areas:**

- Cooperation with other health sectors such as the tuberculosis control programme, public and private blood banks, programmes on sexually transmitted diseases, family planning programmes, maternity and childhood care services, as well as research centres and universities.
- Cooperation with the Ministry of Education, in order to include AIDS in school curricula and ensure the information of students in schools and universities through seminars, training for spouses, and debates.
- Cooperation with the Ministry of *Waqf* and the Egyptian church. As part of this, religious leaders in 10 *mouhafadha* received training, to enable them educate the population on HIV/AIDS and how to prevent the disease.
- Cooperation with the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, in order to implement education programmes for factory workers in the five industrial areas and in the tourist *mouhafadha*, dealing specifically with AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases.

- Cooperation with the information sector, where a lot of activities have been carried out through different national, and local radio and television stations, to broadcast educational programmes on HIV/AIDS. Working sessions have also been organised with media and news representatives in order to foster their participation in programmes to raise awareness about this disease.

- Cooperation with local non-governmental associations. For example, the national AIDS control programme has undertaken sensitisation programmes in collaboration with various non-governmental associations. These programmes target those sectors of society that are most at risk from the disease, to educate them on the disease and the way to prevent it. Other activities have also been organised to mobilise the population in general, and young people in particular.

C- HEALTH INSURANCE

The health insurance system is considered as one of the most important programmes aimed at providing health coverage for the population. There are two components to the system:

- Health insurance for government employees, in line with law n° 32 of 1975.
- Health insurance for students, in line with law n° 99 of 1992.

In exchange for a symbolic contribution, employees and students, they receive total medical coverage.

In the part of this report that deals with children, and which relates to comments on article 18, reference is made to the health record for each child, that is stipulated in law n° 12 of 1996.

Statistical indicators

- The total budget allocated to treatment of citizens in the country increased from 270 million pounds in 2000, to 755 million pounds in 2003/2004, and the number of beneficiaries reached 1 069 459 in 2002.

- The total budget allocated to treatment of citizens abroad increased from 33 million pounds in 2000, to 35 million pounds in 2004, and the number of beneficiaries in 2002 was 175.

- The number of hospital beds under the responsibility of the Ministry of Health and other sectors, and private and medical insurance, increased from 132 182 in 1999, to 144 519 in 2002.

- Cost of health care went up from 3106.5 million in 1999/2000, with a proportion of 1.3% of overhead costs, to 5389.5 in 2002/2003, with a proportion of 3.8% of overhead costs.

(Source: Annual statistics directory – June 2003).

4. RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND CULTURE

(Article 17 of the Charter)

- 1- Every individual shall have the right to education.
- 2- Every individual may freely take part in the cultural life of his community.
- 3- The promotion and protection of morals and traditional values recognised by the community shall be the duty of the state, within the framework of safeguarding human rights.

For comments on this article, please refer to the previous report by Egypt, with the addition of the following dimensions of the new vision of development of the educational policy, and its implementation. The report will then review the right to culture and the rule of information in disseminating the human rights culture.

A- RIGHT TO EDUCATION

The Egyptian government, through the Ministry of Education, has defined the necessary policies, plans, and strategies to carry out in-depth reforms of all components of the education process. The following aspects have been underscored:

1. Improving the quality and quantity of school infrastructure.
2. Total reform of the skills and performance of teachers, as well as all those who are involved in the act of education, at all levels. Development of systems of administration for schools and pedagogical units.
3. Resumption of the system of a full school day, and extension of the school year, in accordance with international standards.
4. Implementation of a coherent system of orientation and psychological and social counselling.
5. Focusing on quality in all reform and development efforts.

In accordance with the provisions of the constitution and general government policy, the development of education is based on the following concepts:

- Maintaining free basic education, in accordance with international human rights conventions to which Egypt is a party.
- Preserving national unity as a fundamental component of ensuring the security and stability of society.
- Preserving the Egyptian identity, and social cohesion.
- Providing early learning services for toddlers, in line with the current educational trends in the world.

The plans and programmes for the development of education are focused around the following axes:

- Continue to extend school infrastructure: Single classroom schools, community schools, and small schools to be developed in order to bring the public education services closer to the community, reduce the school dropout rate, and promote enrolment of girls in school.

- Intake of all pupils: The aim is to provide equal access to school for all, and to increase the enrolment rate in primary education.

- Eliminating the gaps between boys and girls: This can be done by focusing more attention on the enrolment of girls, by providing access to education in the most underprivileged areas, which have no educational services. Such measures require the assistance of local authorities and international organisations.

- Eliminating the disparities between urban and rural areas: By increasing the number of schools in rural areas.

- Develop programmes to provide specialised education for groups with special needs: Through implementation of the following programmes.

- Upgrade existing schools.
- Enrolment of such pupils in 50 conventional schools, for the intellectual aspects of their education.
- Creating 30 classes for children with special needs in private schools.

- Specific programmes for gifted children:

- Design specific tests to determine which children are gifted.
- Design forms for monitoring children in nursery schools, and pupils in the first three years of primary education, in order to identify those who are gifted.
- Provide substantial rewards to any teacher who identifies a gifted child in their class and provides the child with the appropriate pedagogical care.
- Monitor pupils who display excellent skills in sports.
- Set up programmes for gifted children to further develop their knowledge.
- Create an association of gifted children, to take advantage of their views and opinions and establish relations among themselves.

- **Developing the use of information technologies in teaching:** Using information technologies as a teaching tool represents a major qualitative development because it makes it possible to have access to specific educational sites on the Internet. This tool is also useful for training school administrators, in line with international standards. It can be used to train teachers on basic skills and pedagogical skills, with a view to improving their professional performance. It can also be used to provide training on the use of advanced technologies, and their various applications.

This is in addition to the project to equip each teacher with a computer.

- **Developing systems of evaluation:** Through the setting up of school training and evaluation units, which are considered as the most modern formats for training. Training through the national distance learning network, as well as sending groups of teachers abroad so that they may learn about the experience of developed countries in the area of education. A total of 10 084 teachers have benefited from such study trips abroad.

- **Consolidating technical education and students' scientific qualifications through the following programmes:**

- **Quantitative and qualitative development,** with the continued increase in the numbers of students who have access to technical education. Account is also taken of all that this implies in terms of numbers of teachers, school infrastructure, and equipment such as workshops and machine tools. All these also need to be maintained and renewed, as required.

- **Setting up models of developed schools,** by creating model, specialised technical institutes.

- **Linking teaching and practical training.** Several agreements have been signed with establishments that recruit graduates of technical schools in their various areas of specialisation. Under the terms of these agreements, these production units can contribute to the scientific training of students, thus complying with the needs of the market.

- **The MUBARAK project:** In the light of the success of this project, and the remarkable results obtained in terms of the level of graduates, the ministry intends to increase the number of schools involved in the project, and extend it to other specialisations.

- **School canteen services:** This is a major area of interest, given the beneficial effects that good feeding can have on the learning capacity of school children. The number of pupils who benefited from school canteen services in 2001/2002 was 9 083 448, representing an expenditure of 293.4 million pounds. For the 2002/2003 school year, the

number of beneficiaries of school canteen services was 9 527 413, an increase of 443 965. The total cost was evaluated at 333.30 million pounds, which represents an increase of 39.9 million pounds.

Sustainable professional development for staff in the education sector.

- **Increase in the number of teachers:** At the end of the 2002/2003 school year, the total number of teachers was 807 385.

- **Professional promotion for teachers** Such promotion is achieved through developing further training. The different training centres have therefore been developed, and their intake capacity increased, to reach a total number of 18 500 pedagogical positions.

- **Providing the material and moral needs of teachers:**

Illiteracy control:

The sustained efforts of the ministry in fighting against illiteracy are aimed at eradicating illiteracy and providing access to education. These efforts are deployed in various ways:

- **Increasing the numbers of literacy classes:** The number of people registered in these classes in 2002/2003 was 565 578, of whom 324 074 were men, and 241 504 were women.

- **Developing specific methods and means of intervention for adult education:**

- Educational programmes that are broadcast by television channels.
- The specialised learning channel.

- **Training of qualified staff to work in the area of adult literacy and education.**

- **Follow up after literacy courses:**

- Giving those who have freed themselves from the burden of illiteracy the possibility to continue their schooling.
- Increasing the intake age for middle schools to 18, and for access to secondary education to 20 years.

Total number of schools, classrooms, and enrolled pupils in public and private educational establishments

Years	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003
Schools	33 880	35 015	36 332
Classrooms	374 481	379 707	384 491
Enrolled	15 143 687	15 351 540	15 435 500

(Source: IT department of the Ministry of Education and Teaching)

Number of graduates of general and Azhari pre-university education)

1994/1995 academic year				2001/2002 academic year			
		Boys	Girls		Boys	Girls	
Primary	1 203 005	646 622	556 383	Primary	1 440 697	764 546	676 151
Middle sch.	891 177	497 736	411 441	Middle sch.	1 989 388	734 032	355 356
General secondary	304 062	163 964	140 098	General secondary	410 384	209 043	201 341
Commercial secondary	275 284	84 349	190 935	Commercial secondary	277 135	97 765	179 370
Industrial secondary	278 825	187 612	91 213	Industrial secondary	261 384	164 255	97 129
Agricultural secondary	62 802	45 459	17 343	Agricultural secondary	60 938	46 582	14 356

These statistics indicate that the government is committed to achieving full implementation of the right to education. It does so by taking in the increased number of pupils resulting from the increase in the population, through the programmes and plans cited above.

B. HIGHER EDUCATION

Please refer to the previous presentation on this point. Egypt would like to add the following new information relating to certain areas of application and implementation in the field of higher education in the country.

- Admission requirements for students in government universities and institutions of higher learning.

In accordance with the principle of equality before the law, the conditions for admission to Egyptian universities are obviously based on the general average grade obtained by students at the general secondary school baccalaureate, or equivalent diplomas. The admission procedure is under the control of the office in charge of coordinating admissions into Egyptian universities. Students are assigned to the different faculties on the basis of a precise system that takes into consideration the grades obtained at the general secondary school

baccalaureate; their level of knowledge in the key disciplines for access to a given faculty; the wishes of the student, and the geographical location of their home in relation to each university.

- Conditions for appointments of members of the teaching staff in government universities.

The best graduates in the required specialities are appointed as teaching assistants, in government universities. This is done on the basis of the published best grades obtained by each applicant in the scientific disciplines, or through the objective selection of research presented by each applicant.

- The system of open learning

In order to allow those who do not have access to higher education to have the opportunity of pursuing their studies, a system of “open learning” has been created and now exists in several Egyptian universities. Over 40 000 students benefit from this system, in several faculties such as the faculty of law, commerce, and arts. They follow the same programme as their comrades who are registered in the university, and prepare to sit the exams at the end of their studies, to obtain a Bachelor’s degree.

- Adult learning centres

In the same vein, in response to the aspirations of a large number of people who are holders of a first degree, and wish to develop their knowledge, a system of adult learning centres has been set up. Holders of university degrees have the possibility of attending the adult education research centres that are found in several Egyptian government universities, with a view to obtaining a further degree. This is done by way of mechanisms that enable them to choose from a certain number of teaching programmes that comply with the scientific requirements of their position, and the requirements of their environment. These centres also provide the possibility, subsequently, of registering for a Masters or Doctorate course.

University welfare services

The State ensures that students have access to health, cultural, social, artistic, and sports facilities. It also provides for the social welfare of students with particular needs, by providing them with different forms of financial support through the social assistance fund of the higher council on universities. The universities and institutions of higher learning also provide their students with free, supplementary treatment and preventive care. Students from all these faculties and institutions may also receive health services such as supply of drugs, medical tests and exams, and x-rays from external clinics and dispensaries. There are also hospitals in the universities, where all major clinical specialities are

represented, and which provide students with comprehensive medical coverage, free of charge. Sports programmes are set up to encourage students to practice a sport. The Ministry of Higher Education has set up major facilities such as stadia, swimming pools, and gymnasias. Sports competitions are also organised between the various faculties and universities.

The State provides various forms of support and assistance to the cultural and artistic activities of students through its financial and technical support in organising cultural and artistic events in the universities. There are also the cultural weeks, organised by the authorities, where national policy makers are invited to give talks.

The university also provides decent accommodation to migrant students in university hostels, in exchange for payment of a symbolic amount as rent. This is because the Ministry of Higher Education is desirous of providing this category of students with the stability and welfare that they require, by setting up an appropriate environment to allow them pursue their studies regularly, and facilitate their assimilation. Universities provide free meals to residents of the university hostels. The objective of universities is obviously to develop the various activities for students during the school year. Such activities however do continue during the summer vacation period, because universities are aware that their mission towards their students is a continuing one. Activities during the vacation period include sports activities, excursions, and cultural, artistic, and social events, among others.

The State further ensures that university textbooks are available to students at subsidised prices. In the same way, it encourages students who obtain outstanding results by providing them with financial rewards, which act as an incentive.

- System of overseas tours

The State sends groups of scientists abroad to learn about new developments in the field of science, operations, and applications. Many teaching assistants in universities and research centres benefit from this system of overseas tours, which is also aimed at helping them obtain their doctorate degree. The system is subdivided into overseas tours, scientific tours within the country, joint supervision, and scientific leave.

Alongside this system for teaching assistants, there are other arrangements for sending tenured members of the university teaching staff who already hold doctorate degrees abroad. These are also subdivided into scientific delegations and scientific missions.

- National awards and university awards

Through the system of promotions in Egyptian universities, the State ensures that members of the teaching staff continue to undertake research.

- Members of the teaching staff in universities are required to present their research to a specialised scientific committee, when they are due for promotion. That is, five years after they have obtained their most recent scientific diploma.
- Annual awards are attributed each year for the best research in each faculty. Lecturers submit their research themselves to specialised scientific committees, which select the winners of the award. The State encourages the recognition of the scientific contribution of the gifted sons and daughters of Egypt by attributing a number of awards. The most prestigious of these is the President Hosni Mubarak award. This is followed by the State recognition award, the excellence award, and the encouragement award. It must be noted that nominations for the first and second awards in particular, are submitted by scientific organisations. They must take the initiative of sponsoring scientists with proven scientific skills as nominees for these awards. The awards are subsequently attributed on the basis of the appreciation of specialised scientific committees that have been created for this purpose.

Statistical indicators

- Public spending on education increased from 14 747.3 in 1999/2000, representing 14.7% of public spending, to 18 125.4 in 2001/2002, representing 14.3% of public spending.
- Public spending on pre-university education increased from 71.1% of overall spending on education in 1999/2000 to 72.7% of overall spending on education in 2001/2002.
- Overall numbers of students during the 2003/2004 university year was 1.8 million, an increase of 200 000, as compared to the 2000/2001 academic year.

D- RIGHT TO CULTURE

In the area of culture, the government philosophy in relation to cultural issues is that the effective development of society requires knowledge of the experience of others. This a sure way of attaining a harmony of minds among members of the society, and among different peoples. It is also a way of providing the means to adapt to change, confront events, develop feelings of responsibility, and contribute to eliminating international and national problems.

Creativity and innovation, as well as the creation of an enabling environment, are the basis for any cultural action. The State therefore promotes talented and creative people in all artistic and cultural areas and provides them with specialised cultural centres that are equipped with the latest instruments and means. The government also translates Arabic works of literature to be sent to various national and international exhibitions and competitions.

The State has demonstrated its determination to support this field by according the right to culture to all citizens through the various bodies that work under its responsibility to set up the appropriate environment for enjoyment of this right. Among them, we may cite the following.

The Higher Council on Culture

This is an independent body, with a separate corporate personality, that has organic links with all other structures working in the field of culture. The objectives of the Higher Council on Culture are as follows:

- Grant rewards and prizes in recognition of the work of the most outstanding intellectual, artistic, and literary figures.
- Organise national and international seminars and conferences.
- Focus particularly on writing and translation.
- Organise competitions to discover people with talent and ability.
- Foster a love of culture issuing various works and publications.

The Higher Council on Culture supervises the fine arts and cultural production sectors, which include the Cultural Centre for Theatre, the Popular Arts Cultural Centre, the National Cinema Centre, the National Children's Centre, the National Theatre, Popular Arts, and Music Centre, and the Great Library of Cairo.

The Council is in charge of the central agency for the supervision of artistic audio-visual material, the departments of cultural registration and census, cultural research, central statistics, and the data centre. It also provides support to decision-making.

The Higher Council on Culture also has oversight of the Centre for Specialised Innovation (The Haraoui centre, and the Zeinab Khatoune centre), as well as the general departments of literary affairs, the welfare of literary and arts figures, management of copyright, etc.

Academy of Arts

This institution contributes to the development of philosophy, art, and human values, and gives the arts a national orientation. This fosters appropriation of the national heritage, preservation of authenticity and modernity, and consolidation of the cultural and artistic links that exist with national, Arab, and international legal bodies. The academy also works to foster the right climate for the publication of essential works of artistic creation both domestically, and abroad. The mission of the academy has evolved from simply teaching the arts, to other broader horizons. The move has been guided by a pragmatic vision that complements the objectives of the academy. Today, the academy includes the higher institutions of theatrical arts, Arabic music, artistic review, ballet, popular arts, music, and the conservatory and film institute.

Higher Council on archaeology

This council works to protect and preserve the most remarkable national and historic wealth and present it to the public using the best scientific means. It carries out the following activities:

- Carry out research and prospective studies on vestiges of our cultural heritage.
- Preserve such vestiges through renovation and maintenance work.
- Publish scientific and archaeological articles to assist researchers and students in the field of archaeology.
- Ensure that scientific and archaeological records are kept of all antiques.
- Use all existing resources to encourage archaeological projects, as well as museums and a culture of archaeological studies.

- The Egyptian national book office

This body contributes to extending cultural development through a single, harmonised institution on writing and publication, which is in charge of writing, translating, publishing, issuing and printing magazines. It is also in charge of publication and marketing. Within this body, the publication sector focuses on encyclopaedias and dictionaries, children's books, works on art and archaeology, and the

collection of the Higher Council on Culture. It also publishes books on the knowledge of humanity, and specialised series such as war literature, the grammar of the Koran, the history of Egypt, the world and life, the wonders of la fairy tales from around the world, the heritage, Islamic issues, Islamic studies, Arabic theatre, etc.

Between 01/01/2000 and 31/12/2001, a total of 458 works were drafted, translated, and published.

This body also organises international book fairs, including the Cairo international children's book fair.

- The national body in charge of book centres and the national centre for documentation

It contributes to national orientation and facilitates the implementation of the tasks of the Ministry of Culture in the field of national and public documentation, and documentation related to national heritage. It is in charge of national manuscripts and archives, and contributes to writing, translation and publication, by facilitating access to the intellectual production of humanity, and also developing knowledge about library science. It also contributes to the development of an intellectual heritage by going back to its origins and studying them, and by collecting, conserving, preparing, and presenting the various manuscripts, photographs, and magazines.

This body works closely with libraries and scientific and cultural institutions both in Egypt, and outside the country. It also organises a large number of cultural activities such as general or specialised cultural seminars; itinerant exhibitions on the most significant historical photos and documents from different periods, and philatelic exhibitions. In addition to this, the national body in charge of book centres and the national centre for documentation supervises 25 secondary libraries, and intends to double the number of works on the national heritage that it publishes. The centre is housed in immense, imposing rooms where it has manuscripts, books on orientation and knowledge, technology and social sciences. The resources of the centre also include magazines, short films, Internet access, microfilms, CDs, and micro-arts (lists on arts, lists on music, lists of specialised books, United Nations publications). Of course, all this is in addition to the mobile libraries that travel to all parts of the republic.

The book centre works with an internationally renowned printing house, within the framework of collaboration for development and cultural cooperation, for future projects and in marketing (sales points).

- The public agency in charge of cultural centres

It manages and supports the cultural movement, in particular in the following areas:

- It organises the literary movement in the *mouhafadha*, and encourages the spirit of creativity and innovation.
- It upgrades the level of library centres in cultural centres and in its secondary libraries by supplying them with books, and by facilitating the means of access for the general public.
- It is in charge of rejuvenating the fine arts sector by organising events and exhibitions, and by discovering and promoting people with a vocation.
- It studies popular arts and crafts, and supervises popular artistic groups in the various *mouhafadha*.
- It focuses particularly on the dissemination of theatrical culture among the population, and provides artistic supervision of theatrical activities in the various *mouhafadha*.
- It contributes to the holding of meetings, seminars, conferences by raising the cultural, artistic and literary levels of such events.
- It grants financial and literary assistance within the framework of the role that is assigned to it.

The role of this agency consists of organising the literary and theatrical movement in the different regions, and giving impetus to research. It is also charged with promoting the ancestral characteristics of each region. The effect of the work of this agency has been to encourage the population to pursue efforts to promote literature and arts in the regions.

The activities of the agency also include cultural festivals in public clubs and theatres, and granting prizes for such festivals. It also promotes music and song, popular arts in the different regions of the republic, and the cinema culture, through film clubs and week-long Arab and foreign film festivals. It deals with fine arts and crafts, innate art, creative and vocational workshops, scientific education programmes for the youth, external information, and studies and research. Other areas are children's culture, women's culture, including commemoration of women's day, women's rights, family planning, future generations, maternal health, and the workshops on the art of *kheïma*. It plays a role in the 'reading for all' festival. It also participates in the programme for

the control of infantile poliomyelitis, unemployment issues, literacy, and care for mothers, in collaboration with the National Council on Women.

Furthermore, this body comprises numerous specialised cultural centres, and is in charge of organising cultural festival in the various *mouhafadha*.

- The “Opera” national cultural centre

This body is in charge of the following in particular:

- Ensure high quality artistic services on national, regional and international scenes.
- Engage staff with the skills and international experience required to ensure harmony with the artistic and administrative methods of action.
- Develop artistic groups and achieve the expected objectives in the area of disseminating top quality fine arts.
- Preserve the artistic heritage, while identifying the different age groups that appreciate such art.
- Set up the required conditions to encourage artistes from the fields of music, opera, ballet, and voice to remain in the country.
- Set up an ambitious plan to maintain the level of scientific knowledge and qualification of staff of the centre (artistes, technicians, and administrative staff). Maintain the level of training of technical supervisors by recruiting graduates of specialised institutes and faculties.
- Focus particular attention on the younger generations and on talented people who have not had the opportunity to study musical and opera sciences, and develop such talents within the Centre for the Development of Talent, which is under this body.
- Ensure modern, scientific management of the organisation, by implementing a system of business administration, and not the general administration which is applied by other public organs and establishments.

The organisation has carried out several cultural and artistic activities such as hosting high-level artistic troupes that performed at the Opera theatre house; presentation of a series of artistic works from the Egyptian heritage, and organising weekly festivals for children, free of charge, or for a very small fee.

In the area of training, this body has supervised tours by delegations, and developed the talents of youth and children in the area of noble arts, ballet, piano, and choir singing. It has also carried out evaluations at the Opera, using international scientific standards.

Turning to the area of international cultural exchange, competitions and festivals, it has organised festivals of Arabic music. Finally, as part of the process of developing systems and structures, it has developed Arab music groups.

- Welfare fund for artistes and literary figures

This fund was set up as far back as 1964 as a medical and social welfare fund for artistes and intellectuals, as a sign of consideration for their endeavours.

- Cultural Development Fund

This fund plays a very effective role in the creation of libraries, in particular the Mubarak public library, which is aimed at encouraging all citizens, regardless of their age, to develop the habit of reading. It offers the general public books, works of reference, magazines, and audio-visual materials that contribute to personal development.

- The El Qahira weekly magazine

This is a weekly cultural magazine that is published every Tuesday by the Ministry of Culture. The motto of the magazine is “true liberty is accepting to hear all opinions, publish all ideas, and advertise all doctrines.”

This weekly magazine constitutes a cultural message that is transmitted through the pen of illustrious personalities from the fields of arts, letters, science, journalism and culture.

E- The Egyptian information system

The State provides information services through all audio-visual means, and seeks to ensure that the methods used are in line with scientific techniques and the technological innovations in the field of information. This effort is based on the principle that the system of information contributes to ensuring effective enjoyment of the right to knowledge and the right to culture. The Egyptian system of information is made up of the following organs and mechanisms:

- The Radio and Television Union:

Radio:

Through its main channels, radio plays the role that is assigned it in deploying the information strategy within the framework of authentic religious, moral, and social values. It broadcasts 24 hours a day, and the total number of programme hours is 476, per day. The radio corporation has 115 studios, and the annual total of programme hours is 173 725.

There are nine radio stations in Egypt, making up the body of audio-phonetic information bodies. The nine stations each have their specialisation; general programmes, the Holy Koran, Middle East, youth and sports, and culture. There are also local and regional stations, the Sawt El Arab (voice of Arabs) radio, alternative radio stations, and specialised radio stations. Where news is concerned, the general programme station, the Holy Koran station, and the Sawt El Arab radio cover all regions of the Arab Republic of Egypt, including all the remote areas. In addition, there are the local and regional radio stations that cover specific zones in different parts of the republic. News subjects are spread out in a programme that contains 22.2% cultural programmes, 21.3% current affairs and news programmes, 18.4% religious programmes, 16.2% entertainment programmes, 9.6% drama programmes, 6.4% group programmes, 5.7% service and information programmes, and 0.2% educational programmes. This is the programming for the general radio station alone.

Television:

There are two national, direct visual information bodies. These are the first and second television channels. The first channel is the only one that covers the whole of the national territory, including remote areas, but it is followed closely by the second channel, whose broadcasts do not reach certain communities. There are also six regional channels, each covering their own specific region. The average number of hours of television broadcast is 142 hours per day, with a total of 51 837 hours per year, broadcasting from 39 studios.

In terms of the variety of types of televised programmes, this variety is illustrated by the following breakdown. 34.85% of programmes deal with politics and information, 29.31% are entertainment programmes, 9.39% are cultural programmes, 9.14% are group programmes, 8.88% are religious programmes, 3.33% are educational programmes, 2.65% are advertising, and 2.45% are service and sensitisation programmes.

The satellite broadcast sector:

Egyptian visual information bodies also broadcast via satellite. Satellite broadcast is provided by the Egyptian satellite channel, the Nile international channel, and the second Egyptian satellite channel. This

sector aims at reaching Egyptian migrants, Egyptian embassies, and Egyptian people, and information and cultural centres located in Arab, African and European countries, with information from Egypt.

Specialised television channels:

NILE television has a number of specialised channels, broadcasting mainly news, knowledge, feature films, cultural programmes, sports, family and children programmes, and educational programmes. There is also a channel specialising in higher education, the El Manar scientific research channel, and the Nile channel. In addition to these channels, the first and second TV channels, as well as the six regional channels are all broadcast by satellite.

The average number of broadcast hours was 115 000 in 2003, with an average of 16 hours broadcast per day.

Training and qualification of information executives:

Several institutions provide training for journalists in Egypt. Among them are the radio and television training institute, and the institute for training African journalists.

The radio and television training institute was created in 1971. The total programme of training in the various branches covered 177 classes for 2003/2004. The training covered areas such as languages, accounting, radios and television arts, Arabic, and diction, as well as the various areas of administration and finance. Other programmes dealt with organisational, legal and security issues, and the English and French languages.

The International Academy of Information Science:

The academy was established in 2002, following a decision by the Ministry of Higher Education, as a specialised, private, scientific training unit. The scope of the institution covers the ambit of information. It supplements the activity of the Egyptian Company of the Information Production centre. It is made up of a scientific board comprising 14 members, and an executive board that is chaired by the president of the board of directors of the company.

The programme of studies covers a period of four years. Final diplomas from the academy include a bachelors' degree, a masters, and a doctorate in information science. The academy also delivers diplomas for general or specialised professional training courses.

The academy has various departments, dealing with radio and television production, film production, production and marketing of news, the different media, and Internet.

The total number of students in 2002/2003 and 2003/2004, was 520 Egyptians and 17 foreigners.

The State Information Service:

This body disseminates information through 64 complexes and centres, 27 Nile centres, 44 children's clubs, 44 audio-visual clubs, 36 literacy classes, 38 public libraries, and 30 friends of information clubs. In addition, it distributes informational and cultural brochures.

Civil Society:

The Egyptian information system sought to represent civil society within the system. This is why, for the first time in Egypt, private satellite channels have been established in the information free trade zone situated in the city of 6th October. So far, four such companies have been set up (Drama 1, Drama 2, Temima, El Mihwar).

Statistical indicators:

In 2003, there were 37 000 people working for the Radio and Television Union. 42% of them were women. In the same year, women holding the position of heads of departments (rank of 1st secretary in the ministry), represented about 30.7%. The proportion of women directors of a central unit (Secretary in the ministry) was 50%, and 52% for the position of director general. 63.7% of the directors of the various channels were women.

CHAPTER THREE: RIGHTS OF FAMILIES AND OTHER SPECIAL CATEGORIES

(Article 18 of the Charter)

- 1- The family shall be the natural unit and basis of society. It shall be protected by the State, which shall take care of its physical and moral health.**
- 2- The State shall have the duty to assist the family, which is the custodian of morals and traditional values recognised by the community.**
- 3- The State shall ensure the elimination of every discrimination against women and also ensure the protection of the rights of women and children as stipulated in international declarations and conventions.**
- 4- The aged and the disabled shall also have the right to special measures of protection in keeping with their physical or moral needs.**

Under this point, we shall be reviewing the rights of families and the specific categories of people mentioned under article 18 of the Charter. That is, the family, women, children, the elderly, and the disabled.

1- FAMILIES

Egypt would like to refer to its previous report and add herein the efforts that have been deployed by government to support families, and ensure that they have the resources required to meet their needs.

The State has set up a large number of social welfare schemes, which correspond to the prevailing socio-economic conditions in the society. Each insurance system protects its beneficiaries in the case of all types of risks, with the means that are likely to provide coverage of these risks, and their effects or consequences on the lives of the beneficiaries of the insurance.

Under the points below, we shall take a look at measures that have been undertaken to protect and assist families.

A- SYSTEM OF GROUP INSURANCE

In its previous report, Egypt referred to the insurance scheme relating to retirement pensions. It must be pointed out that pensions are increased regularly, each year. As a result, they have increased to more than double their value. In the same way, each year, the minimum and maximum thresholds for contributions are raised. The result is that insurance rights and privileges are increased, while the coverage of social welfare is extended to include new sectors of the population.

Below are a number of statistical indicators relating to the implementation of the scheme.

Number of people insured by "government, business and private individuals" group insurance funds over the periods from 1997/1998 to 2001/2002.

Description	Law 75/79 on State and private sector employees		Law 76/108 on certain categories of business persons			Law 78/50 on persons working abroad		Law 80/112 on coverage for all workers not included in the previous laws		
	Number	% difference	Number	% difference	%	Number	% difference	Number	% diff'ce	
97/98	9335	0.0	1756	0.0		22	0.0	5837	0.0	
98/99	9692	3.8	1820	3.6		23	4.5	5918	1.4	
99/2000	9757	0.7	1837	0.9	16	30.4-	5920	0.0	17530	0.4
2000/2001	10044	3.6	1876	3.1	18	21.7-	5922	0.1	17860	2.3
2001/2002	10422	6.8	1924	4.7	15	6.3-	5942	0.4	18303	4.4

Pensions, allowances, and amounts under compensation scheme, paid out by social welfare funds between 1997/1998 & 2001/2002

Description	97/98	98/99	99/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002
(Pensions & allowances) Public sector, overall	3001549	3423654	3921599	4710719	5287745
pensions K 1975/79	2028815	2365900	2483222	2701490	3914797
Private pensions, former laws	4750785	5474330	6442968	7189390	7921316
Business and private sector					
Total	9781149	11263884	12847789	14601599	17123858

Remuneration (public sector)	183617	210871	252999	281622	339560
(Pensions & allowances) Public sector overall	38557	34009	31710	48715	48638
pensions K 1975/79	152681	371431	354956	373756	392894
Private pensions, former laws					
Business and private sector					
Total	474855	616311	639665	704093	781092

Adjustments in number of cases benefiting from the home transfer service for pensions from the social welfare fund, between 1997/1998 and 2001/2002

Financial year	Public sector workers' fund	Public and private sector companies workers' fund	Total
1997/19/98	3000	22150	25150
1998/1999	3195	22991	26186
1999/2000	3435	23673	27108
2000/2001	4054	29228	33282
2001/2002	4403	28968	33371

Changes in the establishment of social welfare units, as at 30/06/2002

Description	Public Sector		Private Sector		Total	
	2000/2001	2001/2002	2000/2001	2001/2002	2000/2001	2001/2002
Region	31	31	30	30	61	61
Secondary offices	28	30	388	390	416	420
Connected payment points	58	59	4737	4738	4795	4797
Non-connected payment points	4504	4687	4381	4497	8885	9184
Total number of payment points	4562	4746	9118	9235	13680	13981

Number of beneficiaries and amounts paid out during the 2001/2002 financial year

1°) Social welfare sectors	Description	Unit of measurement	2001/2002
	Beneficiaries at year end	Millions of citizens	18.3
	Number of pensioners and claimants	Millions of citizens	7.3
	Net contributions	Millions of pounds	14849.0

	Pensions and allowances paid out	Millions of pounds	17123.9
2°) Nasser social bank			
	Loans	Millions of pounds	24.2
	Zakat	Millions of pounds	23.1

B- SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM

Government plans and programmes are aimed at ensuring the financial stability of poor, low-income families by guaranteeing a minimum income threshold for certain sectors of society who may be prevented from working by social conditions or their health or age. Such people are thus deprived of all resources, as well as the social security and insurance, which were one of the ramparts of families. Government thus provides them with the income required to provide their basic, vital needs. This philosophy makes it possible to provide assistance to individuals and families of all social groups and ages, in particular children, the disabled, widows, divorced women, and the elderly. Law 30 of 1977, on social security, cites the following underprivileged categories and case.

Security allowance

This is paid out to the following:

- Orphans.
- Widows.
- Divorced women.
- Children of divorced women, if she dies, remarries, or is imprisoned.
- Disabled persons.
- Women aged fifty who have never been married.
- Families of prisoners whose sentence is below three years.
- People above the age of 65 years.

Law n° 87 of 2000 amended some of the provisions of the law on social security, and the decree of the President of the Council of Ministers, n° 1426 of 2000 amended the monthly amounts to be paid. These were set between a minimum of 50 pounds, and a maximum of 70 pounds, depending on the number of members of the family.

Child allowance:

The amount of the child allowance is between 1 pound for a single child, and 131 pounds for 4 children.

An allowance is paid for all children below the age of 18 who fall within the following categories:

- Orphans, or children whose father or parents are unknown.
- Children of divorced women, when she remarries or dies.
- Children of prisoners whose are sentenced to less than three years imprisonment.

Monthly allowances:

People in the following categories require monthly allowances:

Pregnant women. From the third month of pregnancy, up to the time of delivery. The amount of the allowance is set at 18 pounds.

Nursing mothers. Up to the time the child attains two years of age. The amount is 10 pounds per month.

Families whose main breadwinner is in prison, or who has been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of more than two months, but less than three years. The amount of this allowance is the same as what is paid to orphans, widows, or the elderly, depending on the membership of the family.

Case of illness Families whose main breadwinner is affected by an illness that prevents them from exercising their occupation, or which affects their income, receive an allowance that is equal to the allowance paid to a disabled person, according to the membership of the family.

Families that have been abandoned by the principal breadwinner for a period exceeding six months, and when the residence of the breadwinner is unknown. The allowance paid in this case is equal to what is paid to orphans, widows, or the elderly, depending on the membership of the family.

Lump sum payments of allowances

The ministerial decree n° 36 of 2002 defines the groups, rules, conditions, and procedures for granting lump sum payments of allowances. This consists of paying the financial assistance to needy persons and families in one single payment, subject to the condition that the average monthly amount of overall financial aid to the family does not exceed two hundred pounds. The objective here is to enable the family set up new projects or consolidate ongoing projects aimed at improving the resources of the family, whether these are individual or group, specialised or non-specialised projects. This aid cannot be less than 500 pounds, but may not exceed 1500 pounds. Priority in granting this assistance is given to people who receive a monthly pension or allowance from the social security scheme, and to their families. The resources are to be used first and foremost to pay school fees, and the costs of funerals or births.

Assistance to former civil servants

Assistance is granted to former employees of the State and of the public sector, who worked for a period exceeding three consecutive years, and who, at the end of their service, are affiliated to a social security scheme or some other form of pension scheme. This relates to the following areas:

Illness: The amount of the aid is set at 150 pounds, and may not exceed 300 pounds.

Education: The amount varies between 50 and 150 pounds, without exceeding 300 pounds.

Weddings of the daughters and sisters of former employees. The amount is set at 250 pounds.

C- IMPROVEMENT OF SALARIES AND WAGES

The State seeks to improve salaries, wages and pensions periodically, as part of the move to provide support to family incomes and enable them provide their needs. Over the period covered by the present report, salary increases were granted as follows:

- Laws n° 18, 19, and 20 of 2001, awarding civil servants a special allowance and a salary increase. This demonstrates the continued efforts of government to improve the living standards of citizens. This is one of the most important laws, as it emphasises the fact that the State takes social issues into account in implementing its privatisation programmes following the opening up to market rules.
- Laws n° 149, 150, and 151 of 2002, awarding civil servants a specific allowance and salary increases. These bear witness to the desire on the part to the State to pursue its efforts to increase the income, and improve the standard of living of citizens. It falls within the framework of integrating social issues in dealing with the impact of the movement to mechanisms of a market economy.
- Laws n° 89, 90, and 91 of 2003, awarding civil servants a specific allowance and salary increases. These bear witness to continued efforts on the part to the State to improve the standard of living of citizens and to attain the objectives mentioned above.
- Laws n° 86, 87, 88 of 2004, awarding civil servants a specific allowance and salary increases. These bear witness to continued efforts on the part to the State to improve the standard of living of citizens as indicated above.

These periodic laws have had the effect of increasing the revenue of the active members of the family, thus enabling them to confront the demands of daily life, and improve their standard of living.

D- FAMILY COURTS

Law n°10 of 2004 established the family courts, with the aim of facilitating legal process, guaranteeing the settlement of disputes in order to preserve the stability of families, and to set up a unified decision-making authority for cases relating to family life or involving children. The law also provides for the setting up of family guidance centres through which an attempt may be made to seek amicable settlements before having recourse to the law. The centres are also intended to be staffed by specialists who provide counselling and orientation.

The law stipulates that the family courts are independent of other courts and shall be furnished with the appropriate means, taking into consideration the specific nature of disputes that are brought before it, and the fact that children are involved. These courts shall also have two specialists on their staff, one sociologist and one psychologist, to assist the court in decision-making. Of the two, one shall be a woman.

Furthermore, the law abolished the final appeal phase against rulings in such cases and limits the process to two levels of justice, in order to shorten the duration of such cases and obtain a final settlement.

This law is of great importance because it provides stability to families, and enhances the role of the family as the basic unit of society. It is also directly beneficial to future generations, who can thus be brought up in a peaceful atmosphere.

E- Family insurance fund:

Law n° 11 of 2004 established a family insurance fund, with the aim of providing financial support to families in the cases stipulated by law. In particular, this relates to allowances and costs granted to women under the terms of a court ruling, in accordance with the law on private cases.

All of the abovementioned laws and measures demonstrate the efforts deployed by the Egyptian government and other national mechanisms to provide support to families and enable them assume all their responsibilities.

F- Implementation of legal measures to protect family rights:

The Superior Constitutional Court has handed down the following rulings, thus confirming families' right to protection:

- The decree relating to case n° 77 of the constitutional judicial year 23, session held on 11/05/2003 specifies “the constitutional invalidity of article 91 of the decree of the President of the Republic issued by law n° 49 of 1972 relating to the organisation of universities, which comprises a time condition for granting to a member of the university teaching staff special leave to accompany the spouse authorised to travel outside the country”. (Family law)

- The decree relating to case n° 2 of the constitutional judicial year 24, session held on 14/12/2003 specifies “the constitutional invalidity 1) of clause 2 of article 106 of the law relating to social insurance issued by law n° 79 of 1975, 2) clause 4 of article 112 of the above mentioned law, which does not stipulate the right of the husband to collect the pension received by the wife in addition to his own pension received pursuant to the provisions of this law as well as the accumulation between his pension and his revenue received for the work or the profession exercised. (Breach of the right to equal treatment, the right to perceive a salary corresponding to the work carried out and the principle of safeguarding family rights).

2- WOMEN

Egypt refers to the point on women in its previous report, and would like to add information about the most recent developments in this area. These are focused around two main axes; efforts deployed by government, and the efforts of the National Council on Women, which is the national mechanism in this field.

EFFORTS DEPLOYED BY GOVERNMENT:

Social services that have been set up under the framework of social affairs:

- A gender unit was established in 1998 within the department of women's affairs. The objective of this was to strengthen the position of women in society and ensure equality of women's and men's rights. The unit is in charge of carrying out studies to enhance the definition of gender in the drafting of development plans, and ensure that gender issues are integrated in such plans. The unit is also in charge of collecting and analysing data on gender, and to educate planners and managers on the importance of identifying and analysing data coming from various sources. The department submitted its first report on the qualitative discrepancy noted in 2001/2002 in the area of literacy. The strategy in this area needs to be reviewed to do away with that discrepancy.

In 2002 and 2003, government granted aid of 8 666 100 and 9 779 100 pounds respectively to development projects that were implemented by the department of women's affairs, and which were aimed at improving the economic, social and cultural standards of women in the rural areas.

- An equality unit was established on the recommendation of the National Council on Women, with the following missions:

Monitor administrative decisions relating to the appointment of women, whether it is in the area of nominations, promotions, or management positions.

Identify the services that are to be provided by the ministry to their female employees, as well as the best means of taking advantage of such services.

Submit proposals on new services that may be made available to women, in line with the economic and social changes that take place within the country.

Review complaints relating to women, and ensure that they are settled, in collaboration with the various departments in charge of social affairs.

- 197 centres for groups of men and women from the different mouhafadha, or from one of the Arab States have been set up in order to protect young people from straying, and to ensure that they are supervised and allowed to develop.

- 528 socio-cultural clubs were created according to a plan covering 2003-2004. The number of people participating in these clubs has totalled 2 307 896, of whom, 98 000 were women.

- Evaluation of services available, and equal opportunities for the employees of the Cabinet in the ministry. The aim of the exercise was to identify the discrepancies in terms of quality of positions, that exist between men and women working in the ministry and assess the importance of providing equal opportunities. The exercise also assessed the services on offer to women in the ministry to determine if women took advantage of them, and how they may be improved.

- Project for the promotion of rural women:

The objective of projects for the promotion of rural women is to transform such women into productive units, based on the social dimension of protection of the family. Another objective is to improve their living conditions through the provision of services, training, and orientation that will enable them to adapt to socio-economic change.

- Care for women and children:

Women constitute one of the categories that are covered by social security. Some women require specific allowances and services under the social security scheme. These are “widows, women aged 50 who have never been married, women above the age of 65, women who have been abandoned, and those who are members of the family of a detainee.”

Law n° 87 of 2000 amended the provisions of law n° 30 of 1977, on social security, which provides for an allowance of 50 pounds for single-member families, up to 70 pounds for families of four members. By law, women may also receive a monthly allowance in certain conditions:

Pregnancy From the third month of pregnancy, up to the time of delivery. The amount of the allowance is set at 18 pounds, subject to the condition that the income of the family does not exceed 100 pounds per month. This aid is suspended after the third live birth.

Childbirth: This is a single payment for childbirth, which is paid to the mother of the baby one week after the application has been made, by a decision of the social unit. The amount is 200 pounds and is suspended after the third live birth.

A woman may also receive aid of 250 pounds when her daughter or sister is getting married.

Family guidance and counselling

172 family guidance and counselling centres have been established to deal with family problems, identify their causes, and work to resolve them. They are also involved in fostering a healthy family environment that will provide children with a good social education. These centres also direct families to the various sources of social services.

Day care centres for infants:

Day care centres are governed by law n° 12 of 1996. There are 9473 day care centres, specialised in care for children under the age of four. Their services enable active women to play their role both at home and outside the home.

The foster family project:

178 families provide foster care for children whose mothers work out of the house. The total number of children with each foster family is limited to a maximum of eight, in order to ensure good care, and reassure the mother. This system also provides an occupation for housewives who have spare time, and allows them to supplement the family income.

Project for the promotion of early childhood:

A project was designed in coordination with a foreign institution to set up a propitious environment for children by generalising good practices in the area of early childhood, through the training of mothers. The project is currently being implemented through 30 associations located in 9 of the *mouhafadha* in the country.

The rural child project:

There are 22 centres that take charge of rural children, located throughout 21 *mouhafadha*. The objectives of these centres are:

- To provide a database of the specific needs and problems of villages.
- Contribute to the specific services for mothers and children.
- Set up a group of people who are naturally capable of taking command, to participate in care and promotion activities.

- Promote and improve existing services, and provide the village with new services that can contribute to the promotion of women and children.

The productive family project:

3400 centres prepare and train productive families. Of these centres, 2390 provide training in areas that are of interest to women. The centres are located in the various *mouhafadha* of the Republic.

Since the start of the productive families project, and up to November 2003, 1 468 933 families have benefited from this project.

Public service:

Under the terms of law n° 76 of 1973 on the public service, young people of both sexes who have completed the different cycles of higher education; cycles above the middle level; middle level, or any equivalent phase provided for by law; or a cycle that is above the middle level or beyond higher education, and who are in excess of the numbers required for the armed forces, or who are exempted from military service, may be authorised by a decision of the Minister of Social Affairs, to work in the following areas:

- Literacy classes.
- Paramedical and health care.
- Development of rural and urban societies.
- Promotion of agricultural and consumer cooperatives, and consumer associations.
- Agricultural, health, social, cultural, and political orientation.
- Training on matters of civil defence, emergency assistance, and rescue operations.
- Providing care to families of combatants, martyrs, and displaced persons.
- Production units in factories and companies.
- Moral and political orientation, and the fight against psychological warfare.
- Supply operations and organisation of distribution of consumer goods, in line with the relevant decisions.

Women are in charge of the appropriate operations and specialities that will enable them play a role in serving society.

The fight against practices that are harmful to women:

A convention on the project to combat practices that are harmful to women was signed in August 1998, with UNESCO, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, and WHO. The objectives of this project are as follows:

- **Abolish the practice of FGM by 2010.**
- **Reduce by half, the number of early marriages of girls.**
- **Present indicators for measuring the final transition of these practices towards total disappearance.**

Within the space of two years, the project was implemented in 62 villages that fall under the authority of 4 *mouhafadha* where FGM is practiced.

5370 community leaders, both men and women, were trained in the 4 *mouhafadha*, and 3450 leaders were trained by non-governmental organisations. In the same vein, 50 460 men and women participated in the various awareness raising seminars and debates that were organised.

Through 60 dialogue sessions with target groups 4 520 women (mothers and grandmothers) from rural areas were educated on the issue.

Furthermore, an agreement was signed in June 2003 with UNESCO, to continue the project, under the title “Prohibition of practices that are harmful to the health of the girl child.” This exercise is based on awareness raising campaigns in order to bring about behaviour change, and revise the erroneous concepts and practices that are inherited from the past.

Education on civil and political rights

The general department on women’s affairs carries out campaigns to educate women on their political rights, and their right to vote or be elected. This is done through the basic education programmes that are dispensed in the centres for the promotion of rural women, seminars organised by clubs, and the activities of development associations and the local community.

The department also contributes to issuing individual membership cards to members of the centres for the promotion of rural women who have gone through the promotion programme, and who attend the women’s clubs. With this individual card, women are automatically allowed to be issued a voter’s card.

Social services and training:

In 2002, training programmes were organised for women on the following activities.

Activity	Number of training programmes
Women's activities	2390
Carpet weaving	347
Trade	268
Leather and shoes	47
Agricultural projects	19
Beekeeping	242

The general department on women's affairs also implemented the following projects:

- The 1964, social pioneers project. In 2003, the number of pioneers reached 1685.
- The 1969 women's clubs project. In 2003, there were 643 such clubs in existence.
- The 1981-1982 project for the promotion of rural women. By 2003, the total number of beneficiaries of the programme was 129 130.
- The project for training rural women in income-generating basic skills, which was set up in 1987-1988. By 2002, the total number of beneficiaries was 10 120.
- The 1987-1988 project on the development of women's food production centres, with 5016 beneficiaries in 2002.
- The 1987-1988 project for training rural women in development and population, which has reached 13 650 women.

Deployment of implementation mechanisms for the abovementioned services and programmes

Counseling offices	Number of centres for migrants	Nb. of day care centres	Nb. of foster families	Project for promotion of early childhood	Rural child project	Senior citizen clubs	Elder care homes	Hospitality institutions	Day care
172	197	9473	178	30 associations in 9 <i>mouha-fadha</i>	22 centre in 21 <i>mouha fadha</i>	130	90	232	61

Types of services and numbers of beneficiaries

Type of service	Number	Number of beneficiaries
Cultural & social clubs	528	9800
Seaside resorts	03	153
Seaside resorts	20	503
Excursions	07	150
Excursions	95	1000
Competitions	03	227
Competitions	100	2500
Seminars	10	1500
Training sessions	08	250

Health services available to women under the auspices of the Ministry of Health and the Population:

Existing laws on health care and medical security make no distinctions between men and women, concerning health care. In the same manner, the laws on health insurance make no distinctions either, relating to the rights provided.

The Ministry of Health has set up many programmes aimed at providing health care to mothers and children and organising family and maternal health in order to ensure health care for women, ensure health security for mothers and their children, and reduce maternal mortality. The ministry has adopted some programmes that contribute to a large extent to reducing the average mortality rate in mothers, and the average rate of diseases and complications during pregnancy and childbirth. Examples of such programmes are indicated below.

First programme for monitoring maternal mortality: This programme makes a daily count of all deaths due to pregnancy, childbirth, or the aftermath of childbirth, in all the *mouhafadha*. The aim of the programme is to analyse the direct and indirect causes of such deaths, which in 85% of cases, could be prevented, and to find the necessary solutions, through the work of national or regional commissions in all the *mouhafadha* and all administrations.

Programme of ante-natal care for pregnant women: The aim of this programme is to provide ante-natal care to all pregnant women, in order to detect early, which women may be at risk and transfer such patients to a higher level, in order to ensure a satisfactory outcome.

Programme of care for mothers during childbirth: With this programme, it is possible to provide women with premises that are equipped to ensure a hygienic and safe delivery, with trained staff (doctor, midwife). Cases requiring surgery may be transferred, if necessary. 176 such

delivery centres have been established and equipped for natural childbirth. They have an ambulance on standby to transfer patients if the need for surgery arises. Emergency childbirth services have also been set up in hospitals to take in those cases that require surgery and provide care.

Programme of services for new mothers: Medical staff pay visits to new mothers in their homes to provide follow-up care, and check for any signs of danger such as haemorrhaging or post-natal fever. During the visit, the health of the newborn is also monitored.

Programme of nutritional support for pregnant women and nursing mothers: This programme is implemented through the supply of basic nutrients such as iron, folic acid, and vitamin A, for nursing mother. Iodine is also added to their table salt. In this way, each year, the ministry supplies about 30 tonnes of potassium iodide to the population. The price of the supply is never increased.

Family planning programme: This programme supplies all the necessary means of contraception, and educates mothers on the importance of the period of abstinence, which will contribute to their recovery.

Maternal health programme: It enables the complementarities between the maternal care services and family planning services, and provides specific services for women of all age groups.

Programme of health education and counselling: This programme is in charge of raising awareness about health issues with the population, to enable them recognise danger signals and harmful practices, and adopt sound, health habits.

All the services mentioned above obviously have an impact on improving health indicators, which are as follows:

- Reduction in maternal mortality

Year	Percentage / 001.000 of live births
1993 National census	174 women
2000 National census	84 women
2001 monitoring system	75 women
2002 monitoring system	70 women
2003 monitoring system	68 women

- Indicators on pregnancy and childbirth care

Indicator	1988	2002
Percentage of new pregnancies covered by ante-natal care departments	56.4	70.5
Average number of consultations by pregnant women	2.3	3.5
Percentage of deliveries attended by medical teams	56.5	66.5
Percentage of deliveries in health structures	27.6	45.8

In 2002, 85% of nursing mothers were supplied with vitamin A capsules.

Health coverage for the poor has been made possible through:

- 1) A system of monitoring of maternal deaths in Wadj El Qabli, where an increase was noted, that was due to socio-economic conditions.
- 2) The anaemia prevention programme that was implemented in middle and secondary schools, in various *mouhafadha* of Wadj El Qabli.

Information sector:

- Percentage of women working at the Radio and Television Union in 2003: 42%.
- The percentage of women holding the position of heads of departments (rank of 1st secretary in the ministry) was about 30.7%
- Percentage of women directors of a central unit (Secretary in the ministry) - 50%.
- Percentage of women holding a position as director general - 52%.
- Percentage of women who are directors of various channels - 63.7%.

The justice sector:

- A woman was appointed as a member of the Superior Constitutional Court.
- 556 women were appointed within the administrative prosecution services, at various ranks.
- The number of women appointed to the body in agency of State affairs reached 68, spread out at various levels.

All the abovementioned efforts deployed by government prove the importance of the services provided by women, and the degree of success that has been recorded in this area. They also illustrate that the efforts of the political and executive administration all converge towards the promotion of women by opening up the avenues that will enable their full participation in national activities, which are aimed at attaining the overall, sustained development of society, through the plan and programmes for development.

B- THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON WOMEN

The National Council on Women is the national mechanism in charge of the promotion of women. In the first part of this report, we cited the decision that led to its establishment and defined its attributions. In this part of the report, we shall be reviewing the activities and programmes to be carried out by the Council.

1- Programmes designed in line with the attributions of the Council:

- A- **Women as the Guardians of Heritage:** The Council set up this programme in order to gather, conserve, and develop the popular, tangible and intangible heritage of women. Indeed, the Council felt that there was a need to gather all these components of our heritage for scientific, technical, and cultural reasons, in order to preserve them, and set up a scientific database that will be open to students, researchers, creative artists, and supporters of women. The project to rehabilitate the art of weaving was launched as a heritage development programme in two *mouhafadha* in the south of Egypt, which is the cradle of this art.

The Egyptian Popular Heritage Association is in charge of implementing this project in collaboration with the National Council on Women. The project will cover two phases.

- 1- The first phase consists of identifying this art in theory, but also on the ground, and defining the role played by women. This part also covers the traditional techniques, aesthetical values, inherited patterns, working tools, raw materials, and a market survey. The market survey will be based on material that has been conserved by means of photography and video, and also the collection of samples.
- 2- The second phase consists of developing the art of weaving by creating new forms so that it becomes a typical Egyptian heritage product.

Preparations are currently underway to organise an exhibition of samples of this art, in collaboration with the appropriate authorities.

B- Rural women's programme:

A programme was set up to review the difficulties facing rural women and propose solutions. To this end, a number of objectives and policies to be implemented through the programme were defined. We may cite among the programmes, training on the difficulties of women in rural areas, and possible solutions. This programme has been launched in four *mouhafadha*.

On 1st October 2003, the Council commemorated rural women's day, under the auspices of Mrs. Suzanne MUBARAK, wife of the President of the Republic. As part of the occasion, festivities were organised in the Kana mouhafadha, which had succeeded in issuing identity cards to all women. During the festivities, the First Lady delivered the last identity card, and inaugurated an exhibition of products manufactured by rural women.

C- Programme on Women in trade unions:

As part of this programme, which seeks to pay tribute to women pioneers in their areas of activity, all trade unions were asked to set a commemorative date for each union. Thus, in collaboration with the General Congress of Workers' Unions of Egypt, a celebration took place on 02/07/2003 in the city of Mahala El Koubra, which was honoured to welcome the wife of the President of the Republic, and the chairperson of the Council. All other unions will be holding similar celebrations, on the basis of a proposed programme.

D- National identification programme:

This exercise has led to close cooperation and coordination between the sector offices of the council and the mouhafadha, the leaders of the *mouhafadha*, and the Ministry of Local Development. The aim of the exercise is to issue an identification number to women who had been unable to obtain one. The sector offices of the council, based in the

mouhafadha, started their national identification activities by educating and encouraging women to obtain their identity number. The council deployed considerable efforts by making contacts with the authorities who could facilitate the completion of the required administrative processes, and also with organisations that could provide the necessary material support.

E- Programme for monitoring the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women:

This programme monitors the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women. As a result, all information and data concerning the achievements of the ministries and various bodies in charge of women's affairs are centralised here, with a view to drafting the national report of Egypt in this area.

2- Projects designed in line with the attributions of the Council:

Project on women as heads of family: This project is designed to enable women who are heads of the family to obtain interest free loans that will allow them to undertake income generating activities in order to meet their needs. The project was designed on the basis of objective criteria, giving priority to women who are heads of family, and whose husbands are incapable of working, or whose children are still in school. The project was implemented in 34 villages situated in 20 *mouhafadha*. Of the 6860 cases considered, 4682 were approved, and the Council is currently carrying out follow-up on the ground, in coordination with the competent bodies in the *mouhafadha*, to identify the work undertaken and eliminate any problems or obstacles.

El Minya multilateral project:

Under the framework of a cooperation agreement between the Council and the Italian assistance institution, a model multilateral project is currently being implemented in the El Minya *mouhafadha*. Other executive organs involved in providing economic, social, and political support to women are also involved in the project. The aim of the project is to create innovative projects, on the basis of the necessary research and studies in the area.

As part of this project, the Council organised a workshop entitled "The management of development", which was aimed at obtaining common guidelines for all the members of the project working team, the political and executive bodies and the experts of the *mouhafadha* and the Council. The workshop had two main thrusts.

- Discussion of the various axes of the project, and the mechanisms for coordination and cooperation among the partners.

- Clarification of the basic concepts of the development function, and definition of the way in which the products of the project could be sustained, through numerous conferences, which should make it possible to define clear relations between the various levels of implementation, the management of the project, and the policies proposed in each of the axes.

The Council also organised a workshop from 21 to 23 December, 2003 in collaboration with UNESCO, in the El Minya *mouhafadha*. This workshop was entitled "Increasing the returns in micro-credit projects." The workshop was designed to train project managers, and develop their micro-project management capabilities. It also defined a method of working with local associations, and emphasised the importance of working in close collaboration with community-based associations and implementation units.

Project on comparative responses to gender needs:

As part of this project, the Council, in collaboration with the studies and investment centre of the faculty of economy and political science of the University of Cairo, and the United Nations Fund for the Development of Women, (UNIFEM), is designing a unique study on comparative responses to the needs of women and men, in order to analyse the position of women in the general comparison, and measure the importance of the comparative responses in relation to the needs of women.

It was felt that the ministries of Youth, and Local Development could start implementing this study, which will be an experience that the ministries can apply in their work. The ministries were thus reviewed, taking into account projects designed for their female employees. The study examined how much benefit women draw from projects when they are designed for both men and women, and reviewed the position of women in the organisational structure of the two ministries. Draft reports have been prepared on the case studies of these two ministries.

Project for evaluating the equality between the two sexes through a review of classified statistics:

This project is an initiative of the United Nations Fund for the Development of Women, and involves Egypt as well as a certain number of Arab countries. The objective is to integrate gender into the operations of the national statistics departments and other operational structures, in order to obtain statistics that take into account the factors that define gender classification, thus using statistical data as a tool for decision-making and development planning.

As a result the central body on general sensitisation and statistics was able to identify the following:

- The Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in 2001, which rectified the maximum and minimum average ages for women.
- The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), which assesses the differences between the two genders by looking at the following three areas:
 - Political participation and decision-making, on the basis of the percentage of men/women in parliament.
 - Economic participation and decision-making, which are revealed by the indicators of percentages of men/women in technical and technological centres.
 - Power over economic resources, which is measured by income in US dollars for men and women (on the basis of purchasing power equivalent).

Project for mainstreaming gender in the economic management of the affairs of State and society:

This is a regional project that is being implemented on the initiative of the United Nations Fund for the Development of Women. It is aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Council in drafting policy documents that respond to the economic needs of gender.

UNDP project:

This project is part of the joint cooperation agreement between four United Nations institutions, aimed at consolidating the National Council on Women. Its objectives are as follows:

- 1- Create a centre for equipping women to participate in political activity.
- 2- Strengthen the capacity of the Council to monitor the report and recommendations of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the Beijing convention.
- 3- Train members of the general secretariat in the use of results-based management (RBM), as an instrument for monitoring and evaluation.

The UNFPA project is part of the framework of cooperation between the Council and the United Nations organisation for Population Activities (UNFPA). It is aimed at mainstreaming gender in planning, monitoring, and evaluation of results.

As part of this, the Council, with the United Nations organisation for Population Activities (UNFPA), and the United Nations Fund for the Development of Women (UNIFEM), organised a series of workshops entitled “Monitoring and evaluation of performance according to gender,

and comparison of performances in response to the needs of gender". These workshops were designed for experts from ministries, in order to train competent trainers in this field.

In addition, an assessment has been made of the qualitative needs (education, health, population growth) or the various mouhafadha, in order to obtain a database of information that will contribute to the effective implementation of a plan that is based on the true requirements of women in all positions. This was done in collaboration with the support and decision-making centre that is under the responsibility of the Council of Ministers.

Supplementary healthcare programme for women: This project is being implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the Population. It aims to set up a model hospital for women (El Djala Ettalimi), which will be equipped with the best quality medical services. This project could subsequently be extended throughout the Republic.

Furthermore, a considerable number of developments have taken place:

- 1- Hospital administration systems.
- 2- Hospital services, in particular those related to the health of mothers and children.

The Council has also shown keen interest in ailments that most often affect women, such as osteoporosis, and breast cancer. On 30/09/2003, the Council organised a colloquium that brought together specialists on osteoporosis, a condition that affects women at menopause. Another colloquium was held on 05/11/2005 on the problems of older women. These colloquia are aimed at defining a better national strategy for dealing with these conditions.

Project for enhancing the political participation of women:

As part of the move to enhance the political role of women, a decision has been made to set up a parliamentary working group bringing together members of the People's Assembly and the *Shoura* Assembly, as well as activists on women's issues. These members will take advantage of their position as parliamentarians to support the promotion of women and examine any legislative initiatives relating to women when they are submitted to the two assemblies. To this end, the Council must provide these parliamentarians with the necessary data and research results, and organise hearings and debates to strengthen their contribution in the different areas. The Council also held a meeting on 25/09/2003 with the secretaries of women leaders in Egyptian parties to review the degree of participation of women in their parties, and the main problems encountered by the secretaries. Another aim of the meeting was to strengthen the cooperation between the secretaries of women leaders and the National Council on Women.

Under the terms of the agreement between the Council and the United Nations Programme for Development, a technical advisory committee has been set up to serve as a training centre for women, in order to enhance their political participation.

Illiteracy control project:

As part of its activities to monitor and support efforts to eradicate illiteracy in the various *mouhafadha*, the Council has undertaken the following:

- Finalised its activities to fight against illiteracy through the reconnaissance exercise that was carried out in the El Fayoum *mouhafadha*, which demonstrated the importance of the existence of a supplementary information system to monitor, evaluate and support the activities of the executive body and extend them to other *mouhafadha*. Indeed, a system of geographical information has been set up to identify the differences in data relating to illiteracy in the various regions of the *mouhafadha*, and the disparity between the number of illiterate people and the classes available. In the same vein, research has been carried out in the field to identify the different causes of illiteracy, with a view to eliminating them.

- It must be emphasised that the pioneering experience in the El Fayoum *mouhafadha* has had a positive impact, and the 2003 report of the *Shoura* Assembly underscored the importance of this experience. Also, the document on education that was presented at the conference of the national party in 2003 called for this teaching experience to be extended. The study was submitted to the President of the Council of Ministers and was discussed in a meeting of the council of heads of *mouhafadha*. Data on school drop-out rate for girls over the past 6-8 years were sent to the National Council on Childhood and Motherhood.

3- Centre for the promotion of women in the area of micro-projects:

The activities of this centre relate mainly to providing technical support to women who wish to obtain micro-credits, as well as to academics who have to provide the necessary commercial and administrative advice. The centre has organised a number of seminars and training session for academics, project leaders, and civil servants. Altogether, 1024 had been trained at the time of the drafting of this report. The breakdown of trainees is as follows:

- 376 academics.
- 138 project leaders.
- 232 civil servants.
- 278 Internet Web Site “Certified Internet Webmaster Certified System Administrator”.

- Consultancy services had been provided for 1054 operations.
- Drafting of 137 feasibility studies for micro-projects.
- Drafting of a series of papers on the implementation and management of a micro-project.
- Practical training provided in 12 cases, and recruitment of 27 people for different positions.

4- Women's complaints office:

The role of the women's complaints office is to receive complaints, review them, classify them, and submit them to the relevant authorities. The office also monitors the various stages of the process up to settlement

The has received a total of 7000 complaints through its toll-free call centre, by mail, by fax, or from people who personally travel to the premises of the women's complaints office.

Complaints received may be grouped in the following categories:

- 36.6% are work related, 26.8% concern private matters, 8.1% concern insurance, 6.9% sexual harassment, 5.5% on political participation, 3.8% for acts of violence, and the rest concern miscellaneous other causes.

The activities of the offices have been extended to include cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Social Reform League, which is a shelter for women who are victims of all forms of violence.

The office has drafted a number of important reports that bear witness to the problems that are brought before it on a daily basis:

- 1- A legal and field study on the difficulties encountered by women in seeking to obtain their child allowance, and the socio-economic effects on families. The study also included a number of recommendations on how to facilitate the implementation of provisions relating to pensions, the setting up of a special pension fund made up of different resources such as the *Zakat*, donations, sale of fiscal stamps for marriage certificates, divorce papers, etc.
- 2- A study on the way in which women in the Saïd region and rural communities are deprived of their inheritance.
- 3- A report on the unilateral power of fathers on their school-going children, and the problems that arise when the parents separate, as well as the cases of retaliation between the two spouses. These have a negative effect on the future of the children.
- 4- A study on the problems facing working women, which are often due to the fact that they are deprived of certain rights such as

the right to paid leave, or the right to maintain family links by working in the same *mouhafadha*, etc. The report also looked at the reasons why women are deprived of their legal rights. This is sometimes due to contradictions between the law and the decisions governing labour.

- 5- A study on violence against women, which cites the legal provisions and the various complaints of violence against women.

Between March 1 and 2, 2003, the office organised workshops for workers at its headquarters, and in its Aswan office. The aim of these workshops was to provide information about the way to deal with women who came in to lodge complaints.

The office held round table meetings on 27/10 and 11/12/2003 to discuss the study that it had carried out, on violence against women. The meetings were attended by representatives of the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Social Welfare, the national centre for social and criminal research, and certain local associations that work in the area of violence against women. The meetings led to the formulation of a number of recommendations, which resulted in the organisation of training sessions for police officers. A manual was also published, containing all the definitions of violence, and its varying forms, as well as the laws that sanction such acts and the legal amendments enabling the implementation of the criminal code against violence.

The office has set up a committee comprising 20 local associations with experience in the area of care for families and women, in order to be able to transfer to these associations, the complaints and questions from families.

It has also recommended the creation of equal opportunity centres in ministries and public services. These centres would be in charge of considering complaints relating to problems encountered by women in their professional life.

5- Legislative efforts in relation to draft bills:

Thanks to the efforts of the legislative committee of the assembly, a number of legislative amendments have been introduced to the law on private matters and on gender. They have removed some of the factors that constrained women's participation, and new laws have been passed on the family court.

6- Research, studies, seminars and debate on the management of women's issues:

1- A centre has been created to archive all information, data and studies relating to women, and draft research and studies in this area.

2- Currently data on all women who have obtained their national identification number in each *mouhafadha* has been recorded. Each month, the centre receives an update of what has been done in each of the *mouhafadha*, in order for it to finalise its GIS digital map. This should make it possible to define the achievements of each *mouhafadha* and compare the results obtained to the objectives that were set.

3- A database on management positions held by women in administrative organisations is being designed.

4- The web site has been updated in order to make it more dynamic and facilitate interaction with visitors to the site through an exchange of views on essential women's issues, and organise votes on certain other questions and proposals. The site is also linked with other sites whose activity is related in some way to the activities of the council, such as the Presidency of the Republic, the Egyptian People's Assembly, the Egyptian *Shoura* assembly, and the site of the Ministry of Insurance and Social Welfare.

5- A page on the standing committees of the assembly is currently being designed for the assembly web site. It will include the membership and attributions of the committees, as well as the achievements of each committee.

6- The information centre is currently drafting documents and presentations in Arabic and English, on the National Council on Women. These documents will be updated regularly to cover all the activities of the Council.

7- A number of CDs have been produced on the following topics:

- The Council's training programmes.
- The project on women as heads of family.
- The UNFPA project.

In addition, the Council, in collaboration with a number of research centres, is carrying out a series of studies to look at the most pressing problems confronting women:

- Research to be carried out by the Economic and Financial research and studies centre of the Faculty of Economics and Political Sciences on "trade liberalisation and its impact on women on the labour market". The research project has been approved technically, and the contract

procedures are now underway with the centre, to enable it do the research.

- A field study to be carried out by the national centre for social and criminal research, on “the socio-economic difficulties of women working in the informal sector”. The theoretical framework and the questionnaire for this study have already been finalised.

- Research to be carried out by the sociological studies and research centre of the American university on “health problems in elderly women”. The study looks at the medical services that would be required to tackle such problems. The draft of the study has been approved, and the funding procedures for its implementation are now underway.

- A study to be carried out by the Faculty of Economics and Political Sciences of the University of Cairo, on the “level of effectiveness of measures aimed at supporting gender equality”. The aim of this study is to determine whether government policies in favour of equality of women are really effective. The dean of the faculty has presented the research proposal, which is now being finalised.

- A study on the “socio-economic situation of women in the *Achwayat*,” which reviews the problems facing women in these regions, and their possible solutions.

7- Organisation of seminars, conferences, debates, and topical sessions on women’s issues:

Many conferences, seminars, and debates have been held on topics of interest to women, and on the ways and means of ensuring that the positive results of the efforts deployed by the committees of the Council are put to good use. The Council has also participated in various national and international conferences in this field. A total of 31 conferences, and 76 debates.

8- Participation of the National Council on Women in the political, administrative and executive bodies and national councils:

The efforts of the Council, and the different successes registered in supporting and promoting women, and eliminating the obstacles to their full participation in development have made it possible for the National Council on Women to be included in the work of other political, administrative and executive bodies and national councils. The Council was also part of the governmental committee that drafted the present report.

9- Annual meetings:

The Council had adopted the wise habit of organising an annual women's conference, which enables women to meet at national level to speak about the difficulties that hamper the promotion of women, and find appropriate solutions.

The efforts deployed by the government and the National Council on Women are a reflection of the complementarity of the action of national and government bodies on women's issues, and in the face of the obstacles that impede their effective participation in development plans. They also show the degree of success obtained at national level in relation to the grave problems facing the society. First among these is illiteracy and family planning. The successes have been made possible by the promotion of women and the enhancement of their effective participation in the development undertakings of the State.

3- CHILDREN

Reference to the definition of who is a child, and the forms of protection provided to them under the terms of criminal legislation and regulations in Egypt will be found in the previous report of Egypt. We shall add here, the plans and programmes that have been carried out by national and governmental institutions, as was as the National Council on Motherhood and Children.

1- GOVERNMENT BODIES IN CHARGE OF CHILDREN:

There are numerous governmental and national bodies that are in charge of working with children. We shall indicate here the organisational and operational aspects of the efforts deployed by government authorities in this area.

1- Social services available to children:

The State provides social services and designs projects and programmes for children through the Ministry of Social Affairs. Among them are the following:

The rural child project:

The object of this project is to achieve the development of poor, service-deprived communities. Children are both the target and the means of deployment of this project, which seeks to set up the appropriate climate to ensure care and development of children before school age, and also their overall harmonious development.

The project has been implemented since 1983. In 2001-2002, there were 22 rural children's centres situated in 21 *mouhafadha* throughout the national territory. Each centre comprises a day-care unit, a family education unit, and a local management committee.

Project for the promotion of early childhood:

This project was carried out between 1997 and March 2003, in collaboration with a European country. Its aim was to set up a healthy environment for children by spreading knowledge about good practices for the development of children. The project was implemented by 30 local organisations in 9 *mouhafadha* throughout the country. The target populations of the study were children, families, authorities, members of the associations, and those in charge of day-care centres.

Children's club:

The children's club is considered as a socio-educational institution that offers social activities for children between the ages of six and eight, in order to occupy their leisure time with modern educational activities.

Children's libraries:

The library is seen as a socio-cultural and educational encyclopaedia aimed at developing the abilities of children between the ages of six and ten. It evaluates cultural information with modern scientific methods, thus contributing to the development of the personality to the child, while broadening their scope of knowledge.

Children's parks:

These are all the green areas of over 1000 square metres, where there are very few buildings, and where the child and their family can practice leisure and sporting activities.

Care institutions:

These are institutions that provide care to children without families. These care institutions provide adequate family care to children aged six to eighteen, who are either orphans, or whose families have either broken up or are unable to provide their needs.

Children in higher education who have not yet obtained a diploma may remain in the institution as long as the conditions that brought them there persist, and as long as they are doing well in their studies. Each institution drafts its own rules of procedure, which define the conditions for accepting children in the institution. They also define the procedures and programmes of service. The services must include health, educational, and nutritional care, in addition to providing entertainment and sports, as well as professional training for children who have completed the cycle of preparatory school, but who did not continue their studies further.

Care institutions for younger children:

These are institutions that are in charge of taking in and providing care to children aged six to eighteen for periods that vary from one child to the other, depending on their requirements of supplementary care.

Social defence:

Social defence is one of the most important prevention programmes of the society. It works in the following areas:

- A- Management of children who are at risk or susceptible to delinquency, or delinquents.**
- B- Care of victims of sexual abuse.**
- C- Management of physically disabled beggars.**
- D- Prevention of drug addiction and substance abuse.**
- E- Families of prisoners and former detainees.**

The basic rules of social defence, which serve to guarantee the rights of all persons, whether minors or not, are as follows:

- Consider children (in each individual case), as victims of multiple conditions that are beyond their control, and who need a large degree of protection and care.**
- No sanctions may be imposed on a child.**
- Children must be totally free to make contact with their family, whether they are in a closed, semi-closed, or open institution.**
- Children must be allowed to choose if they want to continue their studies, whether they are in a closed, semi-closed, or open institution**
- Children are free to receive visits from their family, whether they are in a closed, semi-closed, or open institution.**
- Children have the right to correspond with their family, if they are in a closed institution.**
- Children have the right to attend school, institutes or university, to pursue their studies, whether they are in an open or semi-closed institution. This is required first and foremost by social and family rules.**
- Children may dress as they wish in open and semi-open institutions.**
- Children have the right to visit their family each week, and during holidays and special occasions, according to the criteria laid out in the enabling decree of the law on children.**
- Children who do not attend school have the right to choose the type of the training that they wish to undergo.**
- In all types of institutions, children are entitled to their own individual bed and cupboard.**
- Whatever the type of institution, children are entitled to sports, entertainment, education, reading, television, radio, and cassettes.**

- In semi-closed and open institutions, children have the right to go on excursions, to vacations centres, stadia, and sports complexes.
- In their natural environment, the child is entitled to care and counselling from the social affairs offices.
- In their natural environment, children are entitled to financial assistance if they continue their studies, but are likely to be impeded by poor economic conditions.
- Within their natural environment, a child is entitled to social, psychological and environmental study, to determine the causes of their asocial behaviour.
- Every individual, be they minor or major shall receive guidance and counselling to prevent them from entering into the phases of experimentation, habitual use, and addiction.
- Every addicted individual who requests care and assistance to break away from their addiction, is entitled to assistance, counselling, and transfer to specialised hospitals to receive treatment and monitoring during and after the therapy.
- Families of convicted persons are entitled to care, protection, and assistance without distinction among the various members in different educational cycles, and without taking into account the charge brought against the father, or the reason for his detention or imprisonment.
- Children of imprisoned women are entitled to full protection, care, and an allowance. They are also entitled to visit their mother at regular intervals throughout the whole period of her incarceration or detention.
- Unmarried girls who have a child for the first time are entitled to protection and care throughout the whole duration of the pregnancy. The child also receives care if efforts to establish a normal family with the father of the child are unsuccessful.
- Single mothers who engage in prostitution, or who are forced by conditions to do so, are entitled to protection and care, and may keep their children with them during their stay in the specialised institution.
- Single mothers are allowed to remain in the institution until they marry, if they do not have a family to take charge of them.
- All children in all institutions are entitled to constitute savings. The money thus saved is handed over to them when they leave the institution, and will serve as another form of protection, and a means to a decent life when they return to their natural environment.

Institutions that take in children who are deprived of family care:

There are 232 such institutions, whereas there are 61 care institutions for younger children. These are homes that are in charge of taking in children of both sexes to provide them with social, educational, and health care. They also provide vocational and religious activities, as well as entertainment.

2- Health services for children:

The government ensures that children are healthy by providing a wide range of health services that are aimed at preserving their health and reducing disease and mortality rates. As part of this, the plans drafted by the Ministry of Health are implemented in the following programmes:

Health care for newborns:

The ministry attaches particular importance to this programme, which is one to the most important in protecting the life of children. In order to make this a broad, comprehensive programme for newborns, the ministry extended the concept and its strategies and objectives. As a result, the facilities provided by the programme now cover the whole period up to and after birth. The aim of the programme is thus to reduce the mortality rate of unborn babies in the last months of pregnancy, reduce the rate of mortality and infection of babies during delivery, and reduce the mortality rate of newborns in incubators. The number of centralised incubators in hospitals has increased and went from 84 in 1995 to 197 in 2002.

In addition, ambulances have been equipped with 120 mobile incubators to allow the most critical emergency cases to be transferred to hospitals. Also, the central emergency unit publishes a daily release indicating which hospitals have unused incubators.

Programme of early diagnosis of hyperthyroidism:

This programme is aimed at newborns and is intended to establish an early diagnosis of hyperthyroidism in order to prevent the emergence of the mental and physical disorders that are caused by this defect of the thyroid gland.

This programme, which also makes it possible to identify the prevalence rates of disorders leading to mental disability, has involved 1 000 000 newborns in 22 *mouhafadha*. There are also 10 care and monitoring centres situated in the health security departments.

Furthermore, the 7 clinics that were established to provide counselling on hereditary diseases are being expanded to enable the elimination of disabling hereditary diseases.

Programme of supplementary care for children:

The programme of supplementary care for children forms part of a strategy for providing preventive and therapeutic services to children under five years of age, in line with a detailed protocol whose target is five deadly childhood diseases. This strategy was first implemented in the country starting from September 1997, and is now gradually being extended to all the *mouhafadha* of the Republic.

The programme is a supplement to other children's services and it enables the ministry to provide high quality care and services.

Extended programme of immunisation:

Egypt is one of the countries where vaccination of children against serious childhood diseases that could be fatal is required by law. This is because vaccination is considered a right for each little boy or girl. The diseases for which vaccination is obligatory are the following:

- 1- Tuberculosis
- 2- Diphtheria
- 3- Poliomyelitis
- 4- Tetanus
- 5- Whooping cough
- 6- Measles
- 7- Viral hepatitis
- 8- Mumps
- 9- Chickenpox

The State pays the cost of these services, which are expected to reach all children.

Moreover, the ministry is intensifying its efforts in collaboration with international bodies, to eradicate poliomyelitis completely. The ministry has thus deployed 20 nationwide campaigns since 1996, as well as 14 limited campaigns since 1998. All these represent considerable cost for the State. In this light, it must be pointed out that Egypt has almost attained total eradication, since only one case of poliomyelitis was recorded in 2003.

Support and promotion of breastfeeding:

This ideal method of feeding babies is being promoted and facilitated as a means to improve the health of mothers and children. The programme seeks to increase the percentage of children who are exclusively breastfed during the first years of life, and to encourage breastfeeding in the period immediately after birth.

Child nutrition support programme:

This programme involves the supply of essential nutrients through the administration of vitamin A capsules at nine and eighteen months.

As another step, since 1996, table salt is iodised, because a lack of iodine can lead to mental retardation in children and hyperthyroidism in adults. In addition, iron and folic acid capsules, which prevent anaemia, are distributed in middle and secondary level schools, in collaboration with insurance bodies.

Monitoring of growth and development:

This allows early detection of cases of malnutrition, handicaps, and infectious diseases, in order to prevent or treat them.

Diarrhoea and dehydration control programme:

This programme is one of the first of its type in the world, and has been hailed by the British magazine, *The Lancet*, as the most successful in the area of health education.

Each year, more than one million children are treated for diarrhoea. Thanks to the efforts deployed within the framework of this programme, diarrhoea and dehydration are no longer considered leading causes of infant and under-five mortality in Egypt.

In addition to reducing the under-five mortality rate, this programme has also made it possible to begin to bring an end to the misuse of antibiotics and anti-diarrhoea medicines.

Programme of control of acute respiratory diseases in children under five years:

This programme, which started in 1989, enables the early diagnosis and treatment of asthma, which remains one of the main causes of death in children below the age of five. It is also aimed at reducing the complications of acute disorders of the respiratory system, as well as misuse of antibiotics.

As a result of the improved health services for children, the following improvements in health indicators have been registered:

- 1- Reduction in the mortality rate of infants, from 28.8/1000 live births in 1995, to 24.4/1000 in 2002.
- 2- Reduction in the under-five mortality rate, from 40.4/1000 live births, to 31.3/1000 in 2003.

- 3- Reduction in the mortality rate of babies in incubators from 23% in 1995 to 15.4% in 2002.
- 4- 94% of all salt sold in the market is iodised salt.
- 5- The rate of coverage for children receiving vitamin A exceeded 95% in 2002.
- 6- Rate of coverage for compulsory vaccination rose from 95% in 1996 to 98% in 2002.
- 7- Reduction in the percentage of newborns below normal weight, from 12.8% in 1997 to 10% in 2002.

Health card programme:

Since September 1 1996, health offices are required by law to provide all newborns with a health card at the time of registration of birth. The card contains all the health information relating to the child from the time of birth. This card is filled out by the health office, which directs parents to the appropriate health structure if care is required. The card contains information about the health and development of the child. A system of medical insurance for newborns has also been implemented since 1997.

Programme of health care for street children:

The Ministry of Health and the Population is responsible for providing health care to all categories of the population, in particular those that are most exposed to disease and infection. Among these vulnerable groups are children of school going age, school dropouts, and street children.

The government has worked to implement a strategy that would enable street children to have access to protection. It has set up a health care and medical services plan for such children in collaboration with the Ministries of Interior and of Social Affairs, news bodies, national associations, and members of the society. As part of this strategy, the following measures have been taken:

- 1- Give the required instructions to the units that fall under the Ministry of Health and the Population in the various *mouhafadha* of the Republic in order to design a method of work within the framework of the plan to provide care to street children.
- 2- Carry out full medical analyses of children who benefit from these services, and carry out laboratory tests required to diagnose cases. These services are free of charge.
- 3- Provide the registers needed to monitor the state of health of street children who come to the health service centres.
- 4- Provide a health card in order to monitor the health of the street child, and which they can present at consultations, and in order to have information about their state of health.
- 5- Provide a model of a transfer form to be used in the case of transfer to a higher level or to specialised care facilities.

- 6- Provide a model of a full medical report on the state of health of the street child receiving care.

Programme of care for foundling children:

The ministry has adopted an innovative method in the management of cases of foundling children. Ambulances equipped with incubators may be used to transport such children to the nearest hospital where they receive immediate care, free of charge. 34 centres for maternity and child care have been created and developed and there are plans to create such centres in each *mouhafadha*, in order to guarantee such children a decent life. The centres are equipped with the basic requirements for life, such as food and clothes. These centres are monitored and inspected regularly, in order to ensure that there is a comprehensive service that includes regular medical inspections. Cases requiring surgery are transferred to hospitals. This health services also gives children the right to have health insurance and a health card.

3- Employment of children:

Employment of children is prohibited by law, before the age that marks the end of basic education, or fourteen years, whichever is the highest. Also, children may not be employed for a duration in excess of six hours per day. In all cases, children shall not be employed between midnight and seven in the morning, in accordance with both Arab and international conventions and recommendations governing labour, and with the policy of compulsory education.

Within this framework, the Minister of Labour and Emigration has created by decree, a department in charge of children's employment. This department is directly under the responsibility of the cabinet of the minister, and has been assigned the following tasks:

- Draft policies, plans, and programmes for departments in charge of the labour force, to enable them inspect the employment of children and adolescents. Monitor the implementation of such plans through regular reports and field visits.
- In collaboration with the departments in charge of the labour force, review complaints relating to the work of children and adolescents, that are brought before the department by the higher authorities.
- Establish a data base on child labour in Egypt, in order to have knowledge of the magnitude and nature of problems linked to various activities and professions. Define the conditions for employment of children and adolescents and draft regular, quarterly reports on all this data and information.
- Review existing laws in the area of protection of children at work, in the light of new developments, and participate

alongside interested bodies in the setting up of modalities for implementing the provisions of laws and regulations, which relate to the work of children and adolescents.

- Work hand in hand with all parties and organisations involved in the implementation of the national plan to reduce child labour.
- Carry out research and studies on child and adolescent labour, and supervise similar research when it is carried out in the departments dealing with the labour force.
- Review workplace accidents and professional illnesses involving adolescents, with a view to abolishing the causes, and draft an annual report on the subject.
- Provide technical advice to the various departments on labour inspection where children and adolescents are concerned.
- Organise awareness raising and information programmes on fighting against child labour, and on the conditions of employment of adolescents.
- Respond to questions and requests for information from the authorities concerned, relating to child and adolescent labour.
- Participate in seminars, conferences, debates, and training sessions relating to the prohibition of child labour.

4- Legal protection of children:

Decree n° 2235 of 1997, passed by the Minister of Justice, provides for the setting up of a general department on legal protection for children (General department for the legal protection of children). This department, which was set up within the cabinet of the minister of justice, works in collaboration with the authorities in charge of childhood affairs to implement the national strategy for the protection of children. The strategy also covers legal services for children, in line with Egyptian legislation, and with international conventions in force in Egypt. The department comprises the following units, whose duties are indicated below:

- The educational measures unit.
 - Deals with legal protection of children and prevention of delinquency and other dangers to children, by adopting the appropriate preventive measures for children who are exposed to danger, or are already delinquents.
 - Participates in the drafting and evaluation of prevention and education programmes for children. Monitors the implementation of ministerial policies and activities relating to prevention and social and professional integration of children. The priority in all these activities is given to the supreme interest of children.

- The department of judicial and legislative affairs.
- Work in coordination with the relevant judicial authorities to draft a legal protection strategy for children, as well as a mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the strategy. Propose appropriate changes as required, while giving priority to means of prevention and education.
- Examine existing laws, resolutions and decrees relating to children and propose amendments where necessary, in particular where new draft bills are concerned.
- Receive information, complaints, and requests on violations on the rights of children, or on legal measures in this field, and transmit them to the appropriate authorities for follow-up.
- Inspect children's institutions and centres, draft reports on such inspection tours, and follow up on these reports.
- Participate in activities aimed at providing legal and judicial services to the victims of offences perpetrated by children. Assist children in overcoming the aftermath of such offences, reinsert them in society, and ensure the management of remedies available to children to help them recover their civil rights and improve their living conditions.

The department of training and research.

- Propose training programmes for workers in the area of legal protection of children, in collaboration with the relevant authorities, in order to contribute to improving the effectiveness of such services for children.
- Monitor the activities of training centres and make recommendations as required. Provide advice to staff of judicial services who work in the area of social care for children.
- Undertake and coordinate with other centres, the research and studies that are carried out on childhood and dangerous forms of behaviour committed on and by children. Explore the causes, nature and consequences of such behaviour, as well as the effectiveness of measures taken to prevent its occurrence. Review pioneering experiences from other countries in this field.
- Represent the ministry of Justice before the authorities and international and national organisations involved in the drafting of a policy of legal protection for children. Monitor and participate in national and international efforts to promote services for children, and transmit the results and recommendations of such efforts to the appropriate authorities, while ensuring that they are implemented at national level.

- The department of cooperation with national and local associations.

- Coordinate activities of government institutions and national associations involved in the area of protection and services to children.
- Define the legal criteria for enabling such associations and institutions to participate in legal protection activities for children.
- Monitor the activities of children's service and care structures at local level.

- Information, records, and communication department.

- Collect data and set up records of the dangers and forms of violence or delinquency committed by children, or committed on children, and create the appropriate data bases, taking into account internationally recognised standards.
- Disseminate a culture of children's rights in Egyptian society and raise awareness about the importance of legal and social services. Circulate information about the rights of victims of offences and children who are exposed to danger or delinquency.

- A body has been set up to cooperate with the general department for the legal protection of children as it carries out its duties and seeks to attain its objectives. This body is called the "youth advisory body", and is made up of representatives of ministries, and the authorities and organisations involved in childhood affairs. These representatives are appointed by ministerial decree of the Minister of Justice, after approval from their superior authorities. The term of office in this body is one year, renewable. The body is expected to participate in the drafting of the plan of action of the general department and present reports and recommendations to the latter on the monitoring and evaluation of implementation of the plan.

- In working to attain its objectives, the technical advisory body may call on any governmental and non-governmental structures, as well as militants on child issues apart from its own members for assistance, if it deems it useful. It may also set up sub-committees, as part of its plan of action.

1- THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CHILDHOOD AND MOTHERHOOD

The National Council for Childhood and Motherhood is the national structure in charge of children. In the first part of this report, mention was already made of its creation and its attributions.

The Council concentrates its activities on the area of internationally recognised children's rights such as the right to life, the right to development, the right to protection, and the right to participation.

Below are some of the initiatives and plans implemented by the Council under this framework:

1- National plan on the girls' education initiative:

Egypt has moved ahead of other countries in the world in adopting the girls' education initiative, and has started implementing this initiative on the national territory.

The initiative was included in the State's five-year development plan covering 2002/2003 to 2006/2007. The initiative is based on a bottom-to-top planning method, with the participation of the society and the population. It also requires coordination of government and national efforts at all phases of drafting and implementation, focusing on quality, which can be obtained through training, education, observation, and evaluation.

Implementation of this initiative, which supplements efforts of the ministry of education, is attendant upon the finalisation and review of the data required for applying the plan of action. This is done in conjunction with donor authorities, local associations, and the private sector.

Main thrusts of the girls' education initiative:

- Institutional participation of ministries and other bodies that play a vital role in eliminating the obstacles that prevent girls from going to school, in certain regions. Creating a conducive environment so that teaching in schools is attractive for young girls.
- Participation of associations, in order to bring together all the forces of good will, to ensure the success of the initiative.

- Mobilisation of society through an information plan, political action, and social activity, thus guaranteeing the success of the initiative.
- The required funding must come from State budget, and contributions from international bodies and civil society and private sector entities who wish to support this national initiative.
- Collaborative, bottom to top planning.

The plan is aimed at implementing the following programmes:

- Finalising the data base.
 - Awareness-raising and mobilisation of the society.
 - Extension programme in girl-friendly schools.
- Project for establishing single cycle schools.
 - Project for designing society-oriented schools.
 - Informal schools project, under the auspices of the Saïd Association.
 - The programme to fight against the poverty that prevents girls from going to school involves three projects.
 - School canteens project.
 - The credits and micro-project production fund.
 - Project for allocating assistance to poor families.
 - Monitoring and evaluation programme.

2- Proclamation of the year of the Egyptian girl:

The wife of the President of the Republic proclaimed 2003 the year of the Egyptian girl.

Many meetings were organised to present representatives of girls from the different *mouhafadha*. The authorities and the heads of the *mouhafadha* listened to them speak about their problems. This was part of a move to encourage a modern culture among young people and support the role of national associations and the private sector.

It was decided to select a model young girl at local and national levels, and award them prizes at a reception held in the presence of the First Lady.

3- National strategy for the protection, development, and integration of homeless children:

For the first time in Egypt, a national strategy for the protection, development and integration of homeless children has seen the light. This is the result of the interest shown by the National Council for

Childhood and Motherhood in fighting against the phenomenon of street children, and in guaranteeing the rights of children in difficult circumstances, especially homeless children. The Council organised a national seminar, under the distinguished patronage and the chairmanship of Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, chairperson of the technical advisory committee. During this ceremony, Mrs. Mubarak announced the strategy.

Objectives:

- **Eliminate the phenomenon of street children. As a start, such children must be protected, and the conditions that have pushed them onto the streets must be tackled. Set up the necessary mechanism for their reinsertion and allow them to be effectively integrated, in order to recover their educational, economic, social, and cultural rights, as well as the right to leisure.**
- **Steer development in such a way as to allow the self-improvement of these target populations. Strengthen the capacity of children and their families to participate in social life as citizens who are entitled to a decent life. Such action must be undertaken by ensuring coordination between government and popular efforts.**
- **Change the negative view that portrays the street child as a delinquent citizen, and encourage a positive viewpoint, which sees the child as a victim, and not an offender.**
- **Eliminate the causes of the phenomenon and dig out the economic and social root causes that push children into the streets.**

The recommendations of the national council are aimed at the following:

- **Transform society's perception of homeless children.**
- **Provide the supervisory staff for working with children.**
- **Ensure that children are drawn away from the streets.**
- **Give greater impetus to the role of efficient players such as local associations and entrepreneurs.**

Measures for ensuring strategic development:

- **The plan of action for street children has been finalised.**
- **The analytical document on the contributions of all parties involved in the plan to set up a toll-free call centre for street children has been finalised. The project must now be adopted and implemented.**

5- Children who are exposed to danger and juvenile delinquency:

- Action in this area is in line with the priorities identified by the technical advisory committee in February 2000, followed by the document entitled “A World Fit for Children”, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at the end of the special session on children in May 2002. Egypt played an active role in this area, as the Egyptian delegation was led by Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak. The United Nations documents calls on States to adopt and implement policies, as required, to protect socially deprived children, who are also exposed to danger. This includes children who work and/or live in streets. They must be protected and integrated in society. They must also be guaranteed access to education and social and medical services.

- The concept of children in danger is different from that of juvenile delinquents and as such the fact that a child is endangered must not be seen as an offence committed by the child. This category of children can therefore not be dealt with simply by imposing punitive measures and sanctions. These are children who are victims of social conditions, and their situation is the result of a lack of care and the protection that they need. Poverty and disintegration of families are among the main causes of their difficult situation.

In the light of the foregoing, the Council has proposed the following:

- Group all children who fall within certain categories defined by law under the heading of children exposed to danger. These categories are “children exposed to delinquency”, “children exposed to danger”, and “children below the age of criminal liability”, as well as children who suffer from a mental or psychological disease. Such children must be the target of social and educational action. These children do not violate the law and are most often victims of social conditions. Some have been abandoned by adults. They must therefore not be arrested and detained or subjected to trial. All of the above is in line with the recommendation of the international commission on children’s rights in relation to the second report by Egypt. The commission encouraged Egypt to be more moderate in penalising acts of exposure to delinquency, such as begging.

- Move these categories from the chapter on criminal treatment of children, where they currently appear in the law on children, and include them in a chapter on children who are exposed to danger. The reason is that including them in the chapter on criminal measures tacitly implies that they must be considered as criminals.

- An alternative system for dealing with these children must be set up. The details of such a system must be included in the law or in an executive decree. Furthermore, a proposal has been made to create

committees for monitoring children exposed to danger. Plans are underway to set up these committees, which must be multi-sectoral, in order to be able to provide orientation to children who are deprived of their families.

Achievements:

Under the auspices of the western neighbourhood of Alexandria, and in collaboration with three local associations and the support of the El Youssoufia organisation, a committee has been set up to provide care to children exposed to danger who are transferred there by medical assistants and members of other local associations. The cases are reviewed in great detail by trained social workers. A proposal has been put forward to use the existing local network of relations and services as a means of intervention. The committee on children defines children exposed to danger as those children who are deprived of all essential needs, and who are exposed to mistreatment and abandonment.

- In this area, the Council proposes the following:

- Raise the age of criminal liability of children, which is currently set at the extremely low age of seven years. This proposal is based on the recommendation of the international commission on children's rights.

- Transfer juvenile delinquency cases to the family courts. This proposal is currently being studied. It also aims at ensuring that these courts are unconventional courts that are fully cognisant of the concept of children's rights. The procedure to be followed must involve parents and be aimed at the social reinsertion of the child.

Sanctions must be corrective, first and foremost, and not punitive. They must be well defined within the framework of a law or executive decree. Indeed, custodial sentences for children must only be used as a very last resort, and must be for the shortest possible period. On the contrary, the courts must impose educational and social measures such as professional training, or carrying out certain well defined social duties, etc. The recommended measures may also be based on corrective justice, that is, that the adolescent must correct the harm that has been done by their act. This is also in line with the recommendation of the international commission on children's rights relating to the setting up of programmes for the reform and reinsertion of delinquents within the society.

- Sanctions to be imposed must take into account the age of the offender. A system must thus be set up by law to classify adolescents into age groups and define which modalities and programmes best correspond to the different age groups. There is also a need to separate young offenders and minors from adults.

- The law must stipulate that any court ruling shall be based on a study carried out by sociologists, on the living conditions of the adolescent, and the factors that contributed to the act. This will make it possible to take the appropriate decision.
- The family court must be made up of specialists such as prosecutors, judges, and sociologists who only work on court cases involving adolescents.
- The law must also provide the possibility for the department of public prosecutions to transfer the child from the judicial system towards some form of social service. The aim here is to provide the child with some form of qualification, especially when the offence committed is not very serious, and also to spare the child the trial process. For the moment, only the ministry has this discretionary power.
- Conditions of detention of children in the various institutions cited by the current law must comply with international standards governing the way children are treated in the justice system. Detention and isolation of children in social institutions must be for as short a period as possible. Such children shall have the right to legal assistance, the right to appeal the legality of their detention, and the right to a medical exam right from the moment they are detained. They must be held separately from adults and classified in such a way as to ensure their protection. They are entitled to a healthy diet, medical care, lodging, water, hygiene, leisure, and education.

10-Child labour:

The Council has paid particular attention to fighting against the phenomenon of child labour, by emphasising the protection of their rights as guaranteed by the constitution. To this end, the Council has undertaken the following:

National survey on child labour:

Within the framework of fighting against the phenomenon of child labour, the Council carried out a nationwide survey of child labour, for the first time in Egypt. The survey was carried out in collaboration with the central body for general mobilisation and census. The tables below show some of the essential data of the survey for 2000-2001:

Areas of analysis of the phenomenon of child labour*	Males	Females Total (100%)	
Age groups of working children			
6-11 years	41.1	46.4	42.5
12-14 years	58.9	53.6	57.5
Age at which they started working			
5-6 years	13.4	16.5	14.2
7-8 years	27.7	32.6	29

9-11 years	45.2	40.7	44
12-14 years	13.7	10.2	12.8
Areas where the phenomenon is wide spread			
Urban areas	19.6	9.5	16.9
Rural areas	80.4	91.5	83.1
Level of education of working children			
Less than 10 years	16.4	18.8	17
Illiterate	11.5	20.6	14
Can read & write	24.2	24.1	24.2
Primary	47.9	36.5	44.8
Duration of schooling			
Entered school and then left	10.0	5.9	8.9
Currently attending school	83.9	75.2	81.5
Has never been enrolled	6.1	18.9	9.6
Types of activity of working children			
Agriculture	59.9	73.8	63.6
Industry	2.4	1.4	2.2
Crafts	18.1	2.7	13.9
Services	9.2	6.8	8.5
Commerce	10.4	15.3	11.7

Areas of analysis of the phenomenon of child labour*	Male	Female	Total (100%)
Duration of work period			
Permanent	28.1	34.4	29.4
Periodic	15.5	15.4	15.5
During the summer holidays	55.4	40.4	51.6
Seasonal	2	9.8	3.5
Economic revenue of working children			
Self-employed	0.8	0.8	0.8
Work for cash payment	28.6	19.7	26.2
Work for payment in kind	1.8	0.8	1.6
Work with family, for no pay	67	78.4	70
Work for others with no pay	1.7	0.3	1.3
Unemployed at the moment	0.1	6	0.1
Type of family heads for working children			
Male head of family	6	6	90.2
Female head of family	6	6	9.8
Geographical spread of child labour			
El Fayoum	65.9	34.1	44.3
El Minya	69.8	30.2	30.8
Doumyat	70.2	29.7	30.6
El Charqya	71.9	28.1	29.9
Souhaj	79.2	20.8	20

* Sample size (20 000)

National strategy for the reduction of child labour:

This strategy is based on the provisions relating to the protection of children's rights, as set out under national legislation and international conventions to which Egypt is a party. In particular, reference may be made to law n° 12 of 1996 on children, law n° 12 of 2003 on unionisation of labour, international convention n° 138 of 1973 on the minimum age for employment of children, the United Nations international convention on the rights of the child of 1989, international convention n° 182 of 1999 on the prohibition and immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

General principles:

The abovementioned principle is based on guaranteeing the rights of children and ensuring and ensuring complementarities and interaction among the various types of rights, i.e. economic, social and cultural rights, and the right to education and health. The strategy must take into account the various actors in the area, including the underprivileged in society. It must also be informed by existing policies and programmes, and the availability of the necessary resources for implementing and guaranteeing the rights of children. Finally, the strategy must see the child as an essential factor of society, whose rights are not automatically established. Education of children must be based on awareness-raising, empowerment, exercising freedoms, and preparing children to be the actors of their own development and the development of society.

Methodology:

The strategy to deal with this phenomenon is based on a methodology that emphasises complementarities. That is, the detailed analysis of the problems that exist, while taking into account the social, cultural and economic environment within which the child lives and works. The strategy is also based on the principle of coordination with the authorities concerned by these matters; participation and support of the society in defending the rights of Egyptian children and finally, merging all these efforts. This will make it possible to prevent the emergence of the causes of the phenomenon, confront them, and find the appropriate solutions.

General objectives of the national strategy for fighting against the phenomenon of child labour:

- Immediately eliminate the worst forms of child labour and find alternatives for dangerous work.
- Protect and defend children who work against all forms of exploitation and guarantee their professional, medical, economic, and human capacities and development.

- Eradicate the sources of the phenomenon and eliminate the reasons for its persistence, that is, the factors that push children to enter into the labour market.

Efforts of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood in fighting against child labour:

- Set up a commission comprising representatives of all official and national authorities involved in the issue, with a view to studying the economic and social causes that underpin child labour, and finding adequate solutions.
- Completion of the overall social census, which is aimed at carrying out a national survey on child labour, in collaboration with central body for general mobilisation and census, in order to determine the number of working children, and the regions where they are situated. The survey will also make it possible to identify the type of work that they do and the consequences of such early employment on other problems such as school drop-out rates, and damage to their physical and psychological health, in particular for those forms of labour that fall within the definition of the worst forms of child labour. A summary of the national research on child labour has been drafted and will be published at the same time as the strategy on child labour is announced.
- Sign an agreement between the Council and the International Labour Organisation on the launch of an awareness-raising campaign on the issue of child labour, and the need to regulate this area. The campaign will explain the grave consequences of child labour on children and society.
- Launch a national campaign in the *mouhafadha* that have a high rate of working children, as compared to the total number of children of the same age. The Council organised a series of workshops bringing together various stakeholders in order to define the reasons that have led to such high rates in certain regions; the causes that push children to work; the worst forms of labour, and where they are concentrated. The workshops also identified efforts or programmes aimed at alleviating the gravity of the phenomenon or reducing its consequences. The aim is to develop, assist and support such undertakings. The Council will also give them its patronage by including them among the more effective programmes that could form part of the implementation of the overall strategy.
- Support national policies on child labour, and in particular the worst forms of labour and employment of children aged below the authorised age.

11-National project on the eradication of female genital mutilation (FGM):

General background of the issue of FGM:

The figures revealed by the health census of the population in 2000 show that Egypt has high rates of occurrence of FGM, as compared to other States on the African continent. This phenomenon is widespread essentially in a number of Central African countries, which are Moslem, Christian, or of other religions. However, Moslem states outside of this area are not affected by this practice. This practice leads to psychological and physical problems for women and their families, and is a violation of basic human rights principles. In the light of the foregoing, therefore, the Council is currently playing the role of coordinator and driving force of all national efforts deployed in this area, in collaboration with donor agencies such as the UNDP, UNICEF, and the group of donor countries. The National Council for Childhood and Motherhood has adopted a project to fight against FGM by creating a cultural and social environment that condemns this harmful practice, which violates the rights of young girls in Egypt. The objective of the project is to eliminate the practice in all villages. In this light, the Council is working together with government and local authorities on the basis of successful experience in this field.

The project was implemented for a period of three years in 60 villages in the Egyptian Saïd, and in particular in six *mouhafadha* (Beni Youssef, El Minya, Assiout, Souhaj, and Aswan), with an average of 10 villages per *mouhafadha*. The project was carried out with the full cooperation of local associations present in these *mouhafadha*.

Objective of the project:

The national project is implemented mainly on two levels: the central level, which is in charge of drafting policies and strategies to condemn the practice of FGM, and the local level, which is in charge of changing social concepts and achieving the rejection of this practice in 60 villages situated in the *mouhafadha* of Beni Youssef, El Minya, Assiout, Souhaj, and Aswan (average of 10 villages per *mouhafadha*). The project also aims at creating a conducive environment that will enable the different authorities concerned by the issue to influence the target populations in the villages, and create the necessary pressure groups to bring about a change in the socio-cultural environment such that communities will no longer practice FGM.

Socio-cultural method:

The project selected the socio-cultural approach because experience has shown that tackling the issue from the health angle led to medicalisation of the act. On the other hand, the religious issue does not

seem to be sufficiently clarified. Indeed, FGM is considered a part of a socio-cultural heritage. The project therefore focuses its efforts on this aspect in implementing its training and information plan, and in particular in the drafting of a training manual entitled “Female circumcision... when does it end?” The manual provides answers to all questions and corrects the social, medical, and religious beliefs. It is designed for those authorities who are capable of convincing the target populations, and includes accounts from some communities that have been successful in changing mentalities about this practice.

Partnership with donor countries and international organisations:

This project is a remarkable example of partnership between the Council, international institutions, and donor countries. Indeed, the Council was successful in mobilising the required resources from 8 donor countries, through the project management committee. Representatives of the donor countries and international organisations meet every quarter with representatives of the policy committee and the information group, to discuss the different working strategies and present a periodic report on the programmes and funding required for the activities of the project.

Community-based associations:

The activities mentioned are implemented in villages in six *mouhafadha* by 12 community-based associations, i.e., associations that work within the *mouhafadha*. These local associations were selected jointly with the general union of local associations, the working group on the eradication of FGM, the UNDP, and the technical team of the Council. The selection was made on the basis of well-defined criteria such as experience in the field of development, and in particular the fight against FGM, and in favour of the enjoyment of all human and institutional capacities.

The “Egyptian girl” information campaign:

There is no doubt that information plays a determining role in bringing about behavioural change, in particular when the future of a population is at stake. This was the case in the “Egyptian girl” campaign, which made it possible to have direct discussion of the concerns of the innocent girl who dreams of changing her reality and overcoming her difficulties, through three very direct, simple, and clear messages: “No to being deprived of education, no to FGM, no to early marriage”. Following this televised campaign, which lasted for three months, the Council, in collaboration with the education and information centre of the general information body, carried out an opinion poll of television viewers. The reaction was very positive because all television viewers agreed that the young girl was very convincing, with her traditional clothes, and the beautiful rural scenery that was shown. These gave greater credibility to the message and enabled the target

population to speak out on the issue of FGM. The campaign encouraged young people to turn to the Council to obtain accurate information about the phenomenon. The project was thus able to gather reactions and answer questions, moving from the stage of supplying information, to where there was a real demand from the public.

The “Egyptian girl” campaign was not limited to television alone. The Council subsequently had weekly radio broadcasts on the general programme channel, to discuss the different themes of the campaign. The radio programmes dwelt on the dangers of FGM, with specialists from various fields participating. They stated clearly, on live radio, that FGM was a violation of the rights of the child from the medical, religious, and legal points of view. The Council monitored all these broadcasts fully to ensure that the message did not contain any contradictions or lead to ambiguities in the mind of the target audiences.

Achievements of the project

- A qualitative study was carried out in 12 villages to determine the trends within the rural population in this area, in order to draft a description of the villages.
- A basic training programme on the socio-cultural method was set up, to constitute a nucleus of local supervisors, both men and women, who would be capable of mobilising resources, taking initiatives at local level, and establishing the positive socio-cultural climate required to encourage the rural family to abandon the practice of FGM.
- Experts in fighting against the practice of FGM helped the Ministry of Youth to raise awareness among university students on the physical and psychological dangers, and on the origins of this harmful practice in Egypt. They also helped in correcting the religious and social concepts, in order to deal with the practice, which violates the rights of children. This was done by organising youth camps for young people from the various *mouhafadha* in the Republic. One camp was held in Port Saïd, on 29th August 2003, and there were other camps at Nouib on 16th and 21st September 2003.
- Preparation and launch of the information campaign the “Egyptian girl” against FGM. A series of broadcasts was recorded for radio on topics of interest to the Council, and in particular the topic of FGM. A part of the broadcast was dedicated to popular poetry, while the second part featured specialists, sociologists, eminent personalities, etc.)
- A national commission on legislation and FGM has been set up. It is made up of specialists from community-based associations, the magistrature, religious bodies, and some members of the Peoples’ Assembly and the Assembly of the Shoura. The objective of the commission is to ensure

the amendment of laws in order to arrive at a text that penalises the practice of FGM, and monitor its full implementation.

The Afro-Arab Expert Consultation on Legal Tools for the Prevention of Female Genital Mutilation, held in Cairo in June 2003:

The Afro-Arab Expert Consultation on Legal Tools for the Prevention of Female Genital Mutilation, was held in Cairo from June 21st to 23rd, 2003, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, chairperson of the technical committee of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, and in collaboration with the European parliament, as well as a number of Egyptian and international associations, including AIDOS, the organisation “No peace without justice”), and the Egyptian association for the prevention of harmful practices.

The conference discussed the importance of passing laws and rules that could assist the society in eliminating the practice of FGM, taking into account the cultural environment of each country. The fact that Egypt hosted this meeting, which was under the high patronage of the First Lady, and was graced by her presence, shows the importance accorded to the fight against FGM by the highest political authorities of the country.

The conference resulted in the adoption of the Cairo declaration, which comprises the following points:

- Include legislation and rules penalising the practice of FGM in all laws on political, economic, and cultural rights, as well as women’s reproductive health rights and the rights of the child.
- Use laws as part of a multi-disciplinary approach that includes the participation of civil society and national non-governmental organisations.
- The legal definition of FGM should be formulated by national legislators on the basis of the WHO definition, and in consultation with civil society.
- Formulate programmes and strategies whereby FGM laws will be enforced.
- Sensitise religious leaders on the issue, in order to strengthen the role that they can play in warning about the dangers of FGM.
- Importance of passing laws prohibiting and sanctioning the practice of FGM by medical practitioners, nurses and other healthcare providers.
- Provide for sanctions in case of failure to report known cases of FGM. Governments should consider alternative methods of monitoring prevalence and effects of FGM.

- Women and girls should have full knowledge of their rights and of the laws prohibiting FGM, in order to be able to defend themselves and bring an end to this form of physical violation.
- Governments and international donors undertake to provide the means to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and children.
- Governments should implement all regional and international conventions protecting the rights of women and children.

12-National youth programme for the prevention of drug abuse.

The national seminar on the prevention of smoking and drug abuse by young people was organised by the Council and chaired by the First Lady of Egypt. It marked a significant step in the quality of services in this area, which affects many families. Indeed, the discussion with the young generation, which was presided by Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak had a significant impact, and was a source of hope for numerous parents. This success was built upon in the national programme of the Council, which is aimed at reducing the consumption of drugs among young people, in collaboration with the relevant authorities such as ministries, NGOs, and the United Nations Drug Control Programme.

The programme is intended to launch a national complementary drug control programme for young people; to set up functional and attractive sensitisation programmes in schools, clubs, youth centres, and all areas where young people gather, and provide support to local associations working in this area, while setting up good quality links among them.

In addition, the programme is aimed at launching a vast information and prevention campaign through the visual media. It will also create a model training and expertise centre for supervisory staff working in the field of drug control.

Main activities:

- Coordination and monitoring of governmental and non-governmental bodies in charge of formulating the complementary national drug control strategy for young people.
- Implementing awareness-raising campaigns in 150 schools, aimed at people who have responsibility for young people. This programme will be carried out in coordination with the Ministry of Education and Teaching. Design and implementation of prevention programmes in 70 youth centres, in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth.
- Support to local associations working in this area, while setting up good quality links among them.

- Preparing a vast information and prevention campaign with the Ministry of Information, which will cover both the audio-visual media and the written press.
- Creation of a model training and expertise centre.

13-Health programmes:

Health care for pregnant women:

Objectives:

- Raise awareness among pregnant women and girls of childbearing age living in the Salam El Aouel region about the training sessions on various subjects relating to obstetrics, family planning, and care of mothers and newborns.
- Create a link between mothers and young girls living in the area, and the medical centre, in order to set up a team of health pioneers. This should help to develop their social sense and a spirit of voluntary participation, so that they can disseminate the objectives of the project to families, and organise meetings in neighbouring homes or groups of houses.
- Set up a maternity service and an obstetrical clinic for the local population in the Salam El Aouel medical centre, with the support of GTZ.
- Provide services, counselling and regular monitoring to pregnant women, before, during and after delivery, focusing on the post-natal period in order to reduce the maternal mortality rate due to pregnancy, delivery, or post-partum conditions.
- Provide the facilities for transfer to specialised services.
- Provide preventive services such as immunisation and testing, in order to prevent the risk of tetanus.
- Train medical staff to provide basic healthcare, and identify cases of high risk pregnancies, in the new Qasr El Aini hospital, in the Ain Chams teaching hospitals, and through safe motherhood programmes.

Achievements:

- Five training sessions for pregnant women and women of childbearing age were organised for women in the Salam El Aouel region. The sessions covered the topics of pregnancy, delivery, and post-delivery. In particular, they examined high-risk pregnancies, care for newborns, care for pregnant women, premature delivery, and post-partum haemorrhaging. Other topics covered were nutrition for pregnant women, safe motherhood, FGM, early marriages,

dangerous practices for young girls, gynaecological problems in adolescence, family planning, menopause, and ante-natal and post-partum depression.

- Two health education meetings were held at the homes of two volunteers for their neighbours and other local inhabitants, to speak about the objectives of the initiative and inform them about the objectives of the project.
- A training session was organised at the new Qasr El Aïni hospital for 30 doctors in charge of providing health care. The aim of the session was to train them on the problems of high-risk pregnancies and on care for mothers and children. Another session is going on at the Aïn El Chams hospital centre, as part of the programme on safe motherhood. Twenty doctors have thus been trained on the use of ultrasound scans to monitor pregnant women.

Programme of training for doctors, in order to provide safe pregnancy and delivery:

The National Council on Childhood and Motherhood, and the faculty of medicine of the Aïn El Chams university are involved in this programme. The one week training course provides theoretical training, as well as practical training. The practical component of the course takes place in the gynaecology and obstetrics department. The topics of the course are symptoms of high-risk pregnancies, haemorrhaging before, during, and after delivery, post-partum fever, septicaemia, new mothers, and maternal mortality.

Objectives of the training programme for medical practitioners:

- 1- Training on supplementary care for pregnant women, and diagnosis of high-risk pregnancies.
- 2- Training on the means of ensuring safe delivery.
- 3- Pre-natal care.
- 4- Care for newborns, and how to prevent disabilities.
- 5- Coordination between the levels of primary and specialised care in dealing with pregnant women.
- 6- Nutrition for mother and child during pregnancy and after birth.

Achievements:

Nine sessions have been organised. In each session, 20 medical practitioners were provided with intensive training on different types of equipment such as the ultrasound. So far, 180 trainees from the different *mouhafadha* in the country have participated in the courses.

Reproductive health:

Many factors have contributed to developments in this area. First of all, there is the interest of the National Council on Childhood and Motherhood in the health of adolescents and young people, and secondly, the will of the political authorities to apply the principles of the 1st and 2nd decades of the child. In addition, Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, chairperson of the technical advisory committee of the Council declared 2003 the year of the Egyptian girl. The Council is also committed to defining policies, programmes, measures and methods for promoting and protecting the rights of children and adolescent as enshrined in the 1989 international convention on the rights of the child and in the 2002 document, "A World Fit for Children". As a result of all these, the Council has implemented a project to develop the individual capacities of adolescents, to enable them exercise their right to express their views, and to receive information about their reproductive health. The project enjoys the collaboration of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the Ministry of Education and Teaching, Sedba, and local associations. It is located in 10 *mouhafadha* 'El Charqya, Kana, El Ismaïlia, Beni Youssef, Souhaj, El Minya, Assiout, El Jiza, El Manoufyia, and El Fayoum. Two trainers travel to each of the *mouhafadha* to provide guidance and orientation on the project.

Objectives of the project:

- 1- Provide reproductive health services and information to adolescents in secondary schools.
- 2- Define the requirements of adolescents, in particular young girls, according to their own views.
- 3- Encourage civil society to help students prepare presentations on reproductive health.
- 4- Give impetus to national level reproductive health policies.

Implementation of the plan of action:

- Selection of two female facilitators for girls for each *mouhafadha* and each local association, in order to participate in the implementation of the set objectives.
- Agreement with Sedba to provide technical support and training to the facilitators, in line with new perspectives that may have to be presented to young girls. Sedba has divided the ten *mouhafadha* into three groups on the basis of their geographical location.
- Organised the first training session in October 2003, in the Alexandria *mouhafadha*, followed by the *mouhafadha* of Ismaïlia, El Charqya, and El Manoufyia, where eight facilitators were trained in specialised fields such as technical education, home economics, and physical education. There is also a social worker for each *mouhafadha*. In all, 24 trainees were trained by the end of

the session during which bags containing posters, cassettes, brochures, and fly-leaves on capacity building and sensitisation about reproductive health issues were distributed.

- Two discussion sessions on reproductive health held in Oum El Abtal secondary school for 40 first year secondary school students.
- Agreement with the association, the League of Arab Women, for it to be active within the society and raise awareness among the population on the importance of the project and its objectives. The association also agreed to supervise the facilitators and monitor their activities aimed at attaining the set objectives.
- Train first year secondary students in 20 schools on behaviour in areas relating to reproductive health, early marriages, violence against women and girls, the rights of the child and human rights, customary marriage, adolescence, personal hygiene, FGM, inbreeding, and research methods.

14- Development and strengthening of the capacities of girls:

The idea behind this project is to satisfy the real needs of each young girl or boy living in the most underprivileged rural societies. It aims to empower girls to fight against all forms of discrimination and violence. It also supports the voluntary participation of young people and local communities in their development. The project is implemented in 9 *mouhafadha*, i.e. Aswan, Souhaj, Assiout, El Fayoum, El Qalyoubia, El Gharbia, Kafr Echeikh, El Charqya, and Port Saïd.

Programme on girls' illiteracy:

- The programme is targeted at 9000 girls below the age of 18. The success rate among them attained 85%.
- During the training, 720 girls received diplomas that qualify them to work as facilitators in 720 classes that are dispensed in 12 of the poorest centres, spread throughout nine *mouhafadha*. They received training on the most modern methods of teaching, base on positive participation of the trainee in the act of teaching. The project is based on an exchange of experience and knowledge between trainees and the facilitators. It also emphasises creativity in terms of teaching methods, which are inspired by the environment. The programme also takes into account the needs and choices of young girls and mothers as to the venue, time, and number of hours of classes.
- From a review of birth certificates and identity cards of girls participating in the project, it becomes clear that they are mostly under

14, and have dropped out of school, but have never been in the literacy organised by the public body for adult literacy and education. The project includes a permanent, complementary plan of action to support the girls and enable them change the quality of their lives. In addition, the programme has a very well designed monitoring and evaluation component.

Programme of nutritional and health education for young girls and mothers:

This programme focuses on health and nutrition for women and girls in poor communities throughout the various *mouhafadha*.

- Training sessions were organised to raise awareness about health issues and also to raise issues relating to reproductive health and violence. 160 facilitators from the Fayoum and El Charqya *mouhafadha* participated in these sessions.

- The programme discussed the real difficulties facing girls and focused on the health of pregnant women and new mothers; care for children, in particular newborns, and risk factors. It also looked at the means of organising transfer of patients to specialised health centres.

- The health programme is aimed at training young girls and mothers, in order to enable them monitor the development of children and identify symptoms of delayed growth. This can contribute to diagnosis of various disabilities. The programmes emphasised identification of the most common childhood diseases, and the way in which adequate food and nutrition may be provided to girls, mothers, and children. It also underlined the importance of breastfeeding, as well as supplementary foods, for children.

Training programme on supplementary health care:

- This programme is a supplement to the previous programme on health awareness for mothers and young girls. It was carried out in March-April, during training sessions for 160 young girls and mothers in the Fayoum and El Charqya *mouhafadha*. The training focused on certain healthcare skills such as the management of newborns and the elderly, monitoring the growth of children, and guaranteeing a system of regular immunisation.

- The training included how to administer injections, first aid, and care for the injured, and burn victims. It also focused on fighting against certain dangerous practices.

Programme of support to the voluntary participation of the youth in the development of local communities:

- Training sessions for young people were organised for a total of 240 young men and women in the *mouhafadha* of El Charqya, El Fayoum, and Assiout. The theme of the sessions was voluntary participation in the development of local communities. The facilitators also took part, as part of the continuation of their activities and work for the National Council on Childhood and Motherhood.

- The training programme first looked at issues of planning, implementation and monitoring of development projects, in line with the priorities of young people, and the real difficulties of their communities. It also looked at the definition of the concept of development, which aims at broadening choices, and improving the quality of life of human beings. Other topics discussed were methods for managing, analysing and resolving difficulties.

- The training programme also touched on the calculation of the growth rate in the *mouhafadha* concerned, and the method of reduction of the high rate of illiteracy. It concentrated on means of communication and transfer of information, and on the methods of effectively influencing and bringing about changes in the negative behavioural patterns in the community.

Creation of local young girl' associations:

- The Council has encouraged young girls to create local associations in three *mouhafadha*: Assiout, El Fayoum, and El Charqya. This is in line with the new law on associations. The young girls have to set up the administrative boards of their associations and manage their affairs. This will serve to enhance their participation in community development and encourage them to do volunteer work.

- The objectives of the associations and the proposed activities were defined on the basis of the needs expressed by the young people during various working sessions. Even before the associations were announced, the girls had started to identify problems and draft a list of illiterate persons, with a view to opening new classes in order to fight against illiteracy. They identified all women heads of family, orphans, and young girls who needed birth certificates and identity cards. They proposed small-scale development programmes in order to help alleviate the poverty of families and contribute to reducing unemployment. These are two fundamental problems in many *mouhafadha*. Other problems are linked to the environment.

Efforts deployed at national level:

- The Council contributed to the amendments to the law on awarding Egyptian nationality to children of an Egyptian mother, and to the law on family courts.

- Egypt has removed its reservation on the convention on the rights of the child, and studies are currently underway to update the law in the light of recent developments on the national and international scenes.

5- THE DISABLED

- The State accords particular interest to the disabled, as part of its commitment to ensure solidarity in the society, safeguard the authenticity of the Egyptian family, and guarantee health and social services. This commitment is enshrined in the Egyptian constitution.
- The situation of the disabled is at the heart of the attention of Egypt, in line with the abovementioned constitutional principles, as well as international commitments arising from the accession of Egypt to international human rights conventions.

According to WHO figures, the number of disabled persons in the society is estimated at 10% of the total population. Some studies have shown that the majority of them are mentally disabled (3%), followed by the deaf (2%), the blind (0.5%), paralysed persons (2%), people with other physical disabilities that are not paralysed (1%), people with cardiac disabilities (0.2%), chronic diseases (1%), and other disabilities (0.3%). Some indicators show an increase in the problem, and the need to deploy considerable efforts so that these categories of citizens may be fully integrated in society and contribute in positive terms, each according to their ability, in the development of the country. The tables below indicate the age groups of disabled persons, and the breakdown of disabilities, on the basis of the 1996 census.

Age groups of disabled persons, according to the final results of the 1996 census

	-0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25	-30
Males	5931	11074	18747	24921	20660	15017	13175
Females	5470	8381	13657	14788	10132	7833	6949
Total	11401	19455	32404	39709	30792	22850	20124

	-35	-40	-45	-50	-55	-60	-70
Males	12214	11293	10717	8818	7700	13819	8901
Females	6127	5151	3966	3867	2815	6365	5700
Total	18341	16444	14683	12685	10515	20184	14601

(Source: Centre for education and population activities)

Table of types of disabilities
according to the final results of the 1996 census

	Blind	One-eyed	Deaf-mute	Deaf	Mute	Have lost one arm or leg
Total	11.8	1.6	3.2	1.7	4.2	1.6
Males	10.7	1.8	3.1	1.6	3.9	2.1
Females	11.1	1.3	3.5	1.9	4.7	0.9

	Have lost one or both feet	Mentally ill	Infant paralysis	Partial or total paralysis	Other disabilities
Total	3.2	16.7	12.6	18.7	25.7
Males	4.1	17.4	12.8	19.4	23.1
Females	1.4	15.3	12.1	17.6	30.5

(Source: Centre for education and population activities)

Law n° 39 of 1975 on capacitating disabled persons is based on the following main principles:

- The law applies to all Egyptian citizens.
- A disabled person is defined as any individual who is not capable of depending upon himself alone to work, or carry out or pursue a given task, and whose capacity to do so has been diminished because of a physical, intellectual or sensory deficit, or a deficit acquired at birth.
- The term capacitating of the disabled is defined as all social, psychological, medical, and educational services that must be provided to the disabled person and their family, in order to enable them overcome the effect of the disability. The law emphasises the importance of sports and leisure programmes, which had been neglected in the past in favour of the vocational dimension. The law also provides for services to the family, which plays a vital role in capacitating the disabled person.
- The disabled person is entitled to have access to capacitating services provided free of charge by government, within the national budget. These services consist of the provision of artificial limbs and prostheses, natural therapeutic means, and rehabilitation services. Given the social dimension of these services, the law allows the provision of such services, on condition that payment be made, within the limits stipulated by the ministry.
- A Higher Council has been set up, made up of representatives of various parties involved in providing services to the disabled. The

mission of the council is to formulate the general basis for capacitating services and coordinate and plan services, drawing on both international and local experience. It must also set up enabling projects.

- It defines the responsibilities of the Ministry of Social Affairs, which must set up capacitating bodies and provide such services to all citizens, excluding members of the armed forces.

- The possibility of allowing retired persons or persons who receive social security allowances and their legitimate heirs to have access to capacitating services, to be employed by such services or, if they lose their right to a pension, to receive assistance.

- All businesses employing at least 50 people in the same place or country, or in a different place or country are required to hire a minimum of 5% of qualified handicapped persons. Such employment gives access to the same rights and privileges as those accorded to all other people working in the same conditions.

- Entrepreneurs who do not employ the stipulated quota of disabled persons are liable to a fine and a term of imprisonment, or a fine in lieu of imprisonment. Managers are required to keep a register of disabled persons in their employ. The amounts paid in fines are used to fund capacitating services.

- The law authorises the minister of social affairs to set aside certain specific professions and occupations for the disabled only.

- Suspension of the condition of good health, depending on the disability that is indicated on the attestation of capacity.

- Priority is given to disabled persons who participated in war operations, or who have undergone their military service.

- The department of labour shall communicate data on the employment of disabled persons to the social affairs department, on a regular basis.

- Transfer to the Ministry of Social Affairs of all amounts allocated to them by insurance companies and the department of labour, and abrogation of all contrary texts.

Privileges and facilities accorded to the disabled:

Certain privileges and facilities are accorded to the disabled by the Ministry of Social Affairs in conjunction with other ministries, as part of government efforts to provide for disabled persons. Among them are the following:

- Give preference to products and exhibits from local rehabilitation centres, even if their prices is 5% higher than that of similar products from abroad.
- Purchases by mutual consent between public institutions and capacitating centres will be permissible, to a ceiling of 2000 pounds. (article 7 of law 98 of 1998 on tenders and award of contracts).
- Victims of war disabilities are allowed to pay only one quarter of round trip fares.
- Certain categories of disable persons are allowed to use public transport free of charge.
- Blind people who are holders of a Ministry of Social Affairs approved card have a 50% discount on all train fares. If the blind person is accompanied by someone, they are considered as just one passenger.
- Blind students are paid an allowance of 40 pounds per month, 12 months a year, throughout the duration of their university studies. This allowance is paid even when the student repeats a class.
- Purchase of specially equipped vehicles is facilitated for the disabled, who enjoy an exemption from customs duties, on condition that they drive the vehicle themselves, and that they have the means to maintain it. The horse-power of such vehicles shall not exceed 4 cylinders, with a capacity of 1500 cm³ (Bank account balance of about 10 000 pounds for at least six months prior to the acquisition).
- In the *mouhafadha*, a certain quota of lodgings is reserved for disabled persons, according to the socio-economic characteristics of each *mouhafadha* and the results of the social survey in each case.

Main efforts of the Egyptian government to provide skills to the disabled and ensure their insertion in society:

- Carry out research and studies to evaluate the capacitating services provided to the various categories of disable persons, and work to develop them in collaboration with local and international organisations and bodies.
- Ensure early diagnosis of cases. This relates to the dimension of therapy, which must become a priority, vis-à-vis other aspects of care and services for the disabled.

- Constantly update the equipment, programmes and personnel by introducing new technologies for equipment, and new concepts of technical training for staff. Staff must be selected on the basis of their skills and specialisation.
- Provide multiple forms of assistance to underprivileged disabled persons, in accordance with the law on social security, or through social welfare funds and local associations that work in this field.
- Develop the information and data collection system on the disabled. Record and compare the results with reality on the ground, in order to draft a plan of action that is likely to propose solutions to the problems identified.
- Extend the geographic spread and the numbers of institutions, and propose services for providing care and training to the disabled. The objective is to provide such facilities both at central and at local levels, including in villages. This will make for the capacitating of those groups that have not yet benefited from such services.
- Allocate the necessary funds to support social capacitating services for the disabled through the so-called periodic subsidies, and exceptional subsidies, as well as loans to fund plans and projects in this area. In this light, periodic subsidies to central associations for capacitating activities totalled 15 219 thousand pounds. This is separate from subsidies for implementation and equipment, and the exceptional subsidies.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Social Affairs has set up the following mechanisms for providing services to disabled persons:

Social services bureaux:

There are 141 such offices spread throughout the national territory. They are in charge of taking in candidates for proficiency training, without distinction of age or social category. The staff of these offices, who are in charge of proficiency training, carry out social, psychological, medical, professional, and pedagogical tests and studies, using the available means of assistance such as hospitals, schools, workshops, and factories that can provide training services to the disabled. There are such bureaux in every mouhafadha. They also supply prostheses and artificial limbs.

Social service centres:

There are 26 of them, spread out in all *mouhafadha* on the national territory. In addition to carrying out tests and studies for the disabled, the centres also provide the following services: Physical preparation, artificial limbs and prostheses, vocational training, educational and social programmes, and psychological counselling for families.

The centres also provide indispensable boarding care for disabled persons who are undergoing training. Some centres are specialised; the centres for the deaf, and the blind. Others are more general.

Manufacture of prostheses:

Fourteen factories in the country manufacture prostheses. They specialise in the manufacture of artificial limbs and prostheses for disabled persons.

Special protected factories:

There are six factories of this type. They are meant for disabled persons who are unable to work on the external market because of the nature of their handicap. These factories serve as an intermediary phase between the training programme and their return to society and total reinsertion.

Natural therapy centres:

36 centres are equipped to take in disabled persons who require natural therapy such as the use of water, air, heat or electricity to treat and alleviate their handicap. Care is free of charge, unless the social enquiry shows that the patient is capable of contributing to payment.

Day-care centres for disabled children:

A total of 63 such centres are located in all the *mouhafadha*. Their role is to make an early diagnosis and intervene in the case of disability in children.

Mental care institutions:

Their total number is 25. Their role is to define the capacitating programme for mentally disabled persons between the ages of 8 and 25. These institutions carry out studies and classify cases, in order to offer the adequate programme for each age group. The programmes have various components; education, social behaviour, leisure and sports, vocational training, and insertion in the corresponding employment positions.

Society-based proficiency training:

This is a mode of training that makes it possible to provide training at home, no matter what the age or type of handicap of the disabled person. In this way, the family, the disabled person, and the local community can all participate in project planning and in the formulation of a training programme.

Associations providing training to disabled persons:

These are associations that have been created in compliance with the law on local associations and institutions, to work in the area of specific categories of the disabled. The law enables the Ministry of Social Affairs to authorise such associations to provide training services for one or more categories of disabled persons. There are 712 such associations spread throughout the country. They work with blind, paralysed, and deaf or hearing impaired people, as well as people suffering from articular rheumatism, cancer, mental diseases, physical disabilities, and multiple disabilities.

Some of these associations have achieved a lot of success by drawing on the experience, the advanced technology, and the voluntary work of many men and women, as well as national and international experts and organisations.

A fee is levied for their services, except for underprivileged persons, for whom the social dimension is taken into account.

Efforts by the Ministry of Education and Teaching to provide education for the disabled:

Education for people requiring special care is an area of special interest, no doubt reflecting the vision of civilisation of our society, and the perspicacity of our political leadership. It proves that the ministry is determined to translate into reality, one of the fundamental principles for cultivating quality in teaching, that is diversity. This translates into the setting up of sufficient and adequate possibilities for such groups to have access to education.

These efforts have been deployed through the following three phases:

- Five schools were set up in the *mouhafadha* of Cairo, El Sahel, Zeitouna, Old Cairo, and El Firdaws, in addition to a centre for mental care.
- The centre for complementary care provides its services in five other centres situated in Nasr, El Wayli, El Salam, Essayida Aïcha, and the Mahmoud Sami El Baroudi school.
- 55 special schools for the mentally disabled in different *mouhafadha* followed the curriculum of conventional

schools. As a result, the number of classes attached to the public education system not totals 244.

- Thirty classes for people with special needs have been created and attached to the private education system(see annexe 5 on enrolment, classes, students, and teachers of people with special needs).

Efforts by the Ministry of Health to provide care to the disabled:

1998 marked an increase in interest in the care of foundling children. In this area, the ministry has adopted the following measures:

- Use of ambulances equipped with incubators to transfer such children to the nearest paediatric or general hospital.
- Passing of a decree instructing hospitals to immediately admit such children free of charge, in the appropriate ward, to receive care, tests, and treatment.
- Coordination with the Ministry of Interior to ensure that the hospital administration informs the appropriate police authorities, to allow them to take the necessary legal steps while the child is still in the hospital.
- Free health insurance for such children.
- Creation of a foundling children's unit in the childhood and motherhood care centre of each *mouhafadha*. These units have been equipped with all the means that will enable them to provide decent living conditions for children in these centres. In 2003, there were 34 such units set up in all the *mouhafadha*.
- Creation of a database to take census of such children.
- Institute a system for monitoring these units.

About 2536 children were taken in in 2002. It must be noted that the infant mortality rate fell from 16% in 1996 to 5.6% in 2002.

The ministry pays particular attention to under-five children, pregnant women, and new mothers, because they are among the most vulnerable categories of the society, given the health problems that can affect them. They represent 65% of society and vulnerable categories of all ages. Various plans and programmes have been formulated to overcome the different problems and provide them with high quality services. The ministry also provides psychological care in 14 hospitals located in all the different *mouhafadha*.

Finally, hospital institutions, some NGOs such as charity associations and religious associations, as well as the private sector, have worked with the ministry to provide care and treatment as required to these categories of the population.

Efforts deployed by the Ministry of Interior to assist the disabled:

The Ministry of Interior has focused on mechanisms that make it possible to provide custody for the physically disabled, facilitate the work of the police, and provide facilities for mentally disabled persons who attend public institutions. For example, people with specific needs are exempted from paying taxes on their driving license. They are also guaranteed the issuance of a passport for those who do not hold a diploma of general secondary education.

Efforts by the National Council on Childhood and Motherhood to provide care for disabled children:

Toll-free number for persons with special needs:

This toll-free number is the link with families of persons with special needs. It allows the best expert to provide medical advice free of charge, and direct people towards the public services, local associations, or schools and universities that provide specialised teaching. It also contributes to guaranteeing the rights of the families.

It also makes it possible to collect and record information and proposals expressed by users of the service. As a result, a database can be set up that will be a true reflection of the prevalence of disabilities in Egypt, the services provided, and the types of disability. In addition, the Council intends to set up a monitoring and coordination committee with the ministries and local associations.

Partners:

- The ministries of Education and Teaching, Justice, Health, and Higher Education.
- The General Union of Local Associations, which provides the scientific tools.
- The University of Ain El Chams, the Institute of Speech and Hearing, and the Institute of Paralysed Children.
- The University of Cairo, Ophthalmology, in line with the cooperation protocols signed last year.
- The Centre for Information and Support in Decision-making.
- The Egyptian Communications Company.

Mrs Suzanne Mubarak announced the launch of the toll-free number on September 7 2003. Since then, the number of daily calls has reached 1250, and 4666 questions have been recorded. There are also plans to include the most frequently asked questions in the data bank, and to broadcast information about the different disabilities instead of music, when people have to hold the line. There are also plans to record video cassettes on common diseases such as Down's syndrome and Cooley's anaemia.

5- ELDERLY PEOPLE

Elderly people are no doubt one of the most significant phenomena that have recently raised interest in Egypt and throughout the world.

In this respect, Egypt was one of the first countries to start taking care of the elderly. Indeed, the State has introduced plans and programmes providing the elderly with social protection according to the age groups and needs, knowing that very old people receive from the Ministry of Social Affairs all the attention wanted and all the required health care.

The Ministry provides care for seniors through the following mechanisms:

Residential homes for very elderly people:

These homes receive people aged 60 or more who are not taken care of by their natural family or who for any other reason, regardless of their material, cultural or health level require assistance and decent living conditions.

The care offered in these homes depend on available resources and concern the health, social, psychological, cultural and leisure aspects.

Clubs for elderly people:

These are care centres offering different services to elderly people to enable them to have a good time and use their capacities to organise activities during their free time.

These projects are implemented at the local level which offers material and human resources by the local associations and voluntary workers.

Services for the elderly:

It is a new form of service where the services are offered at the home of the elderly person, by the club's personnel or other and consists in supplying cooked meals, care, massages, care by electrodes, and emergency medical care, if necessary.

Live-in help:

This is currently being experimented by the family support association and the Red Crescent association. These are two central associations which train people for this mission.

Natural therapy units:

Offer well-being services to elderly people, each according to their physical condition.

Host family:

This system is aimed at receiving 2 to 5 same gender elderly people who cannot be taken care of by their natural families for a given reason (solitude, marriage of children, widowhood, etc.) in a host family that is psychologically and socially prepared to take them in. The family must provide them with full-time care, including meals, physical care, social care, entertainment, etc. in return for an agreed monthly stipend, on condition that the family lives in similar working conditions as that of the elderly persons. Five *mouhafadha* were chosen to try the project on an experimental basis. They include Cairo, Alexandria, El Jiza, Suez, and El Qalyoubia.

Objectives of the project:

This project is aimed at offering total care for elderly people and providing a similar psychological climate to that of the natural family that they lost. The programme involves a small number of elderly people learning to live in a normal family. The aim is ensure security for both the host family and the elderly persons, since the arrangement brings material comfort to the family and company and occupation of free time for the elderly people.

The five departments concerned by the implementation of the project worked together with the associations. Each department gave 7,500 Egyptian pounds to the families without furniture or equipment. Similarly, the Ministry received numerous requests from families offering to take in elderly people.

The Minister for Social Affairs maintains permanent working relationship with the different bodies concerned by elderly people such as academies, universities and service providing agencies to offer the best service, carry out studies and research and participate in different seminars and conferences. These agencies include, but are not limited to: the medical service for elderly people, the national centre for social and criminal research, the Ministry for Health, the Ministry for Information, the social security fund, Bank of Egypt, etc.

In the context of caring for different gender elderly people:

There are 130 clubs offering medical care, social, cultural and leisure services in a healthy family environment designed to promote social adaptation.

Furthermore, 90 institutions well-equipped to receive elderly ladies with comfortable social conditions, offer medical, psychological, cultural, social care and leisure activities.

FOUR: OBSTACLES TO IMPLEMENTING THE CHARTER IN THE EXISTING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Egypt has already quoted in detail the obstacles encountered during the implementation of the convention and dictated by the political, economic and social conditions resulting from the transition to a market economy. These obstacles are centred on three fronts: illiteracy, poverty and unemployment.

Egypt coped with these obstacles through a clear policy expressed via ambitious development plans which we have already mentioned in the first part of this report. Indeed, Egypt is committed to implementing these plans through complementary programmes in all fields in order to ensure development and increase production and investment in accordance with the 2002/2007 five-year plan. At the same time, it will take into account the commitment concerning the social dimension and the conditions of international commitments in the field of human rights.

The indicators reveal the success of efforts deployed to implement plans and programmes and mainly the efforts aimed at coping with the aforementioned problems and obstacles. Indeed, the following results have been recorded:

- Reduction of illiteracy from 38.6% in 1996 to 29.88% in 2002.
- Increase in the active population from 16.955 million in 1997/1998 to 18.2 million in 2002/2003.
- Increase in salaries and wages and allocation of regular annual bonuses to ensure balance between wages and prices.
- Promotion of small projects to absorb labour and attract it to the free market, in accordance with law n° 241 of 2004 on the promotion of small enterprises.

The population problem is a major challenge for Egypt. The rising demographical figure is a big burden on the resources of the State. Revenues from development rates are invested in covering expenses incurred by the demographic increase and particularly sanitary care,

teaching, in addition to the working world where demand exceeds supply.

Family planning plans and programmes are high on the list of priorities to be implemented by the State.

These national plans for reducing the natural growth of the population have succeeded since demographic growth has slowed down to 19.6 per thousand in 2003. The State continues its efforts to gradually reduce the average natural growth. Similarly, the State continues to devote efforts to increasing investments and participation in regional economic communities and the international society in order to raise average economic growth to the rate required for sensible growth in relation to average demographical growth. This will enable Egypt to realise a margin between these two rates and provide the required means for implementing ambitious development plans which will enable total implementation of the rights stipulated in the African Charter.

Family planning indicators:

- 1- Fall in the level of births in Egypt which shrank from 4.1 new born babies for 1,000 women in 1990 to 3.1 for 1,000 women in 2002.
- 2- Increase in the number of women using birth control resources (37.8 in 1989 to 55.1 in 2000).
- 3- Increase in the average life expectancy of women at birth (63.5 in 1996 to 71.5 in 2001).

These indicators demonstrate the success recorded in the implementation of family planning programmes and activities and the limitation of the negative consequences linked to high demography.

**FIVE: EDUCATION, AWARENESS, INFORMATION AND DISSEMINATION
OF AGREEMENTS
ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

In order to save the honourable Commission's time and avoid repetitions, Egypt refers readers to its previous report and simply includes herein the new activities and developments since said previous report.

1- CONCERNING THE MINISTRY FOR JUSTICE

The training programmes aimed at reinforcing capacities in the area of human rights continued with the UNDP. They concern workers in the fields of justice, the department of public prosecutions, the police and information as well as the general directorate for human rights affairs of the ministry for justice.

Programmes have been established towards the organisation of seminars and conferences with regional universities, on the definition of human rights on the national and international level. The first seminar on the right to equality was held in coordination with the University of Alexandria in 2002. Similarly, the Egyptian encyclopaedia on human rights as well as the laws and decisions on the national mechanisms of human rights were published. The encyclopaedia includes certain judicial decrees issued by the Superior Constitutional Court and mainly those concerning general principles defining the viewpoint of the Constitutional Court on the constitutional texts on human rights.

Furthermore, the subject of human rights was added to the training programme for new interns from the department of public prosecutions. Currently, preparations are underway to organise a national competition on this subject.

2- CONCERNING THE MINISTRY FOR EDUCATION

Numerous questions and modern definitions were added in the teaching programmes in the basic teaching phase. Their number reached 22 questions and definitions, including primarily:

- the rights of men, the rights of women, non-gender discrimination, the rights of children and the fight against child labour as well as legal

awareness, through the participation of the ministry in the proceedings of the national commission on international humanitarian law. Indeed, the Ministry is convinced of the importance of recognising all aspects of human rights even during times of armed conflicts which may be an obstacle to the implementation of certain human rights.

- Academic programmes and school books containing definitions and information on human rights in order to teach school children about these rights which are fundamental to decent life, and a basic cornerstone of civilization and progress.

3- CONCERNING THE MINISTRY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Human rights guaranteed during peace time and during armed conflicts are included in the primary compulsory subjects for graduate and post-graduate degrees in numerous theoretical faculties of the public university in Egypt. In this respect, the Superior Council of Universities decided to consider the subject of human rights as one of the prerequisites in all theoretical faculties of these universities. Furthermore, all theoretical faculties include in their organisation charts, specialised research centres, which recognise the commitment to disseminate the culture of human rights and respect of basic freedoms. Hence the creation of study and research centres on human rights, a centre for legal research and studies, a centre for sociological research, a centre for political research and studies at the University of Cairo. Similarly, the institute for environmental research and studies, the centre for legal and economic studies and the institute for studies on childhood were created at the University of Ain El Chams in addition to the creation of the centre for human studies and the centre for legal studies at the university of Alexandria.

All these centres swell the ranks of those already existing in Egyptian public universities.

4- CONCERNING THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

A- Concerning the teaching of students of the faculty of police and advanced studies:

- The police faculty ensures, through courses and training, that its students are taught the values and concepts of human rights and the importance of preserving human dignity. This is to prepare them for dealing in a dignified way with citizens, and preserving their basic rights in accordance with the principles contained in the charters and international conventions, in the Constitution and the law regarding the preservation of human rights and human dignity.

- The subject of human rights is a compulsory core subject at the faculty.
- Legal and police subjects are integrated in human rights subjects (such as Islamic Shari 'a, the code of criminal procedures, international organisation, constitutional law, criminal psychology, complementary laws and resolutions, security guidelines, and the administrative function of the police.)
- International humanitarian law is taught to students.
- All the faculty's publications must include the subjects relating to human rights in order to circulate them among the officers and students.
- Cultural seminars are organised for experienced fourth-year students, in order to deal with practical problems encountered in the field of human rights and the preservation of basic freedoms.
- Research competitions are organised between the students in the field of human rights to find a definition to lawfulness, while working as police officers.
- The police library was enhanced with practical books and studies that deal directly with human rights in order to allow students and interns to know what goes on in this field.
- The subject of human rights and human rights themes are taught to advanced students in research programmes.

B- Concerning the training of police officers:

- Numerous courses on human rights were organised together with the UNPD and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs for officers of the central zone working in prisons, police stations, centres and in criminal research. Further, similar courses were organised for people working in the Saïd region in order to reach the largest possible number of officers at the Ministry level and especially those whose work require interfacing with the public. All this is aimed at gaining more knowledge about human rights concepts and values and simplifying procedures to shorten and expedite police procedures. Between January 2003 and April 2004, 11 courses were given to 450 interns.
- A training session on human rights was organised in coordination with the police academies and the National Council for Mother and Child for 77 officers working in the area of care for delinquents.
- Coordination is provided with the Ministry's training department with a view to organising similar sessions for civilians and employees of the ministry and especially those whose work require interfacing with the public.

- Training sessions are given to interns to deal with human rights themes, the importance of preserving the dignity of citizens and to facilitate provision of the service they provide.

C- Concerning the police research centre, the following measures were taken:

- A scientific department was created at the police research centre known as the “department for criminal justice and human rights”, in charge of scientific activities in the different aspects and areas of criminal justice.
- The centre participated in numerous seminars and conferences and prepared numerous research projects and drafted articles on human rights.
- A guide book on police services was published on the procedure of police services to citizens in the different fields (traffic, declaration of work, criminal record, passports, pilgrimage, identity cards, birth certificates, etc.).

D- Concerning research:

The academy organises, through the faculty of training and development, the police research centre and in collaboration with the relevant authorities of the Ministry, the training department, the different ministerial bodies, UNDP and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, a large number of research competitions at the ministerial level for officers, personnel and civilians. The aim is to take a closer look at the concept of human rights, their dissemination among all categories of the police force and demonstrate the Ministry’s interest in human rights and the preservation of human dignity. Financial incentives are also given to reward the winners of the competition.

E – Concerning police publications:

The police academy makes sure it includes human rights in all its publications as a means of raising the awareness of police officers, employees and civilian workers. Indeed, the purpose of these police publications from the faculty of police, the police research centre, the faculty of advanced studies, the faculty of training and development and the overall security review is to deal with subjects related to human rights.

E – Concerning the publication of brochures:

- Three definition manuals have been prepared. The first is for members of the police force and stresses the commitment to protect human rights

and preserve basic human freedoms. The second is for the public to define its rights and the role of security services in their protecting and preserving these rights. The third deals with developments and policies followed by the Ministry of Interior in this field. Measures have been taken for the circulation of these manuals to different parties working in the field of human rights within and inside the ministry, the relevant public institutions and the different ministerial bodies.

- A periodic brochure was circulated to all ministerial bodies on the results of the work carried out by the internal and external control bodies. It stresses the importance of preserving human rights and human dignity and the commitment to take care of detainees, to preserve their right to contact their family and kin and respect human rights in correctional facilities.

SIX: THE COOPERATION BETWEEN EGYPT AND AFRICA FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

The cooperation with African States in all fields constitute one of the priorities of the efforts deployed by Egypt to promote the African continent and the investment of African resources in the interest of Africa and Africans in order to place the African continent at the forefront of the international scene considering that it has sufficient natural and human resources to play a positive role in development and participate in decisions in the third millennium.

Based on this vision, Egypt created the Egyptian fund for technical cooperation with Africa at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs by Republican decree n° 620 in 1980. As part of its activities, the Fund has signed 161 bilateral conventions on technical cooperation with African States as well as 31 trilateral agreements with a view to expanding the fields of tripartite cooperation with Governments and international organisations and donor technical agencies to increase the Fund's resources.

Bilateral cooperation cover the areas of diplomacy, medicine, healthcare, agriculture, hydraulics and water resources, hydrology, industry, the police, anti-criminal laws, maritime transport, communications and information technologies and scientific research, tourism, trade shows, seminars and conferences.

Concerning African relations, Egypt has signed the following African conventions, in addition to international and regional conventions on human rights quoted above.

- Republican decree n°37 of 2001 stipulating the approval of the constitutive act of the African Union signed in Lome on 11/07/2000 (published in the Official Journal n°40 of 04/10/2001)
- Republican decree no n°160 of 2003 stipulating the approval of the agreement protocol relating to the Economic community and the African parliament approved during the 5th extraordinary session of the Conference of African Heads of State and Government held in Syrte dated 03/03/2001 (published in the Official Journal n°2 of 16/10/2003)
- membership and participation of Egypt in African Economic Groups (the Saharan Sahel group, the COMESA)

Below is a review of the different activities and fields of Egypt's cooperation with African states

1- Concerning security cooperation with African States

From January 2000 to end August 2004, 30 training sessions were organised for executives from various African police forces. These sessions brought together 68 interns from the majority of African states.

2- Concerning cooperation in social fields

Egypt participated in the following African conferences, commissions and seminars:

- The regional seminar on the issue of women and the challenges of the 20th century (from 31/03 to 02/04/2000 in Casablanca Morocco).
- The seminar on poverty control and awareness raising on equality organised by the International training centre, an affiliate of the International Labour Organisation (from 16 to 24 July in Tunis).
- the meeting of the women and development commission (from 05 to 08/11/2001 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia).
- The debate session on poverty and its effects on the Arab society (organised in Sudan by the Arab League in cooperation with the Sudanese government from 05 to 9/01/2002).
- The workshop on the development of small tapestry enterprises (from 04 to 08/06/2002 in Rabat, Morocco).
- The meeting of experts from the women and development commission (from 09 to 11/10/2002 in Johannesburg – South Africa).
- The seminar on designing and defining Arab indicators for social development in Tunis (organised by the Arab League in cooperation with the Tunisian government from 26 to 28/03/2003).

- The seminar on the professional insertion of people with disabilities in Tunis (organised by the Tunisian ministry for social affairs and solidarity in cooperation with the international labour bureau from 20 to 21/05/2003).
- Meetings of the 26th session of the African Union labour and social affairs commission (from 10 to 15/04/2003 in Mauritius).
- Seminar on the standards and principles of social work in Sudan (organised by the Arab League in cooperation with the Sudanese government from 13 to 15/10/2003).
- The training seminar on the administration of social action agencies in Tunis (organised by the Arab League in cooperation with the Tunisian government from 06 to 10/10/2003).

In addition, other bilateral conventions have been signed with certain African states regarding social responsibility for people with disabilities.

3- Concerning the training of African medical executives

As part of the cooperation with African States and initiatives to promote the development of health services for these States, Egypt trained 68 paramedical executives from 16 African countries between 2000 and 2004.

4- Concerning the labour force:

Egypt cooperates with the African regional centre of the administration (Harare – Zimbabwe), an affiliate of the International Labour Organisation which offers a platform for debating and exchanging experience between Egypt and the 16 participating African States, notably for the participation of the representatives of the three parties in production (the government – workers – employers) at the training sessions organised by the Centre in Africa, in addition to the holding of seminars and semi regional meetings in Egypt.

5- Concerning teaching.

Egypt is linked to 42 African states through cultural agreements for which application programmes covering all the areas of joint cooperation in teaching have been set up. They include:

- 1- The exchange of information, textbooks and programmes and educational resources in the field of general and technical teaching.
- 2- The exchange of the technical projects of students to know the environmental characteristics, the customs and traditions of different countries.

- 3- The exchange of information on new teaching technologies and the computer as a teaching tool.
- 4- The exchange of historic and geographic information that can be included in textbooks.
- 5- The ministry for education and teaching of the Arab Republic of Egypt sends teachers at the request of the other party, with the details being defined by diplomatic channels.

From 2001-2003, Egypt sent 180 Egyptian teachers to work in five African countries as part of the Afro-Egyptian cooperation in the field of teaching.

Concerning culture:

The Superior Council for Culture signed a large number of conventions and application programmes for cultural cooperation as well as memoranda of understanding between the Arab Republic of Egypt and some African States. These agreements concern application programmes regarding cultural cooperation, and the creation of numerous mixed commissions.

Concerning information.

The Institute of African Journalists was created in 1977 to consolidate the friendly relations with African States. Up to 2004, 2314 African interns had been trained during the 72 sessions.

CONCLUSION

As it presents its report, Egypt wishes the Honourable Commission full success in the missions entrusted to it and reaffirms its availability to answer any question concerning the contents of the report.

APPENDIX:

**LAW N° 94 OF 2003 RELATING TO THE CREATION OF THE NATIONAL
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

In the name of the people,

The President of the Republic,

After adoption by the People's Assembly,

hereby enacts the law, the contents of which is given hereinafter:

Article One:

It is hereby created a Council known as the National Human Rights Council, under the authority of the *Shoura* Assembly and aimed at promoting and developing the protection of the human rights, the entrenchment of these values, the generalised awareness of these rights and contribution to ensuring their exercise.

The Council is granted independence to exercise its missions, activities and jurisdictions.

Article 2:

The Council includes a President, a Vice-President and twenty-five members selected from among recognised public personalities for their experience and interest in human rights issues, or having particularly contributed in this field.

In the event of absence, the Vice-president of the Council shall replace the President.

Membership of the Council is fixed by decree from the *Shoura* Assembly for a period of three years.

Article 3:

In view of the realisation of its objectives, the Council is charged with:

- Preparing a national action plan to promote and develop the protection of human rights in Egypt and propose the means for doing so.**

- **Submit proposals and recommendations to the competent authorities on anything that may protect, reinforce and improve human rights.**
- **Express opinions, proposals and the necessary recommendations on everything submitted or transmitted to it by the relevant authorities and parties in regards to the issues relating to the protection and promotion of human rights.**
- **Receive complaints concerning the protection of human rights, examine them, transmit them as necessary to the competent departments, ensure their follow-up or advise the interested parties on the legal procedures to take, help to take them or settle them in collaboration with the relevant parties.**
- **Follow up on the implementation of international conventions and treaties on human rights and submit to the relevant parties the proposals, observations and recommendations required for their proper application.**
- **Cooperate with national and international organisations concerned by human rights to enable the realisation of the Council's objectives and develop relations with it.**
- **Participate with Egyptian delegations in international and regional events and meetings concerning the protection of human rights**
- **Give recommendations on the drafting of reports which Egypt is committed to submit regularly to the human rights commissions and agencies, in accordance with international conventions and answer their questions in this field.**
- **Work in coordination with international institutions concerned by human rights and cooperate with the National Women's Council, the National Council on Childhood and Motherhood, and other relevant councils and agencies on human rights issues. Work towards the dissemination of the culture of human rights and raise the awareness of citizens on this subject, by relying on institutions and agencies concerned by the issues of teaching, information and education.**
- **Organise seminars, conferences and debates on subjects related to human rights or similar events.**
- **Submit proposals likely to reinforce institutional and technical capacities in the fields of human rights notably the technical preparation and the training of people working in international institutions linked to public freedoms, economic, social and cultural rights in order to increase their competence.**
- **Publish bulletins, reviews and publications connected to the objectives and competences of the Council.**

Article 4:

State bodies must assist the Council in the exercise of its functions, facilitate the implementation of its attributions and provide it the data and information it needs to match its attributions.

The Council may invite any and all representative of these bodies to participate in the works of the Council and its meetings without voting right.

Article 5:

The council is assisted by a sufficient number of qualified staff; a sufficient number of experts and specialists to allow it to carry out its missions and the attributions granted to it.

Article 6:

The Council meets when convened by its President at least once a month and anytime necessary. It must meet at the request of three of its members.

The Council can hold a valid meeting if the quorum of 1/3 of its members is reached. Its decisions are taken at a majority of votes of the members in attendance. In the event of a tie, the President shall have the casting vote.

The President may invite to meetings any person that he deems useful due to that person's opinion or experience concerning the subject under review or debate, without voting rights.

Article 7:

The President of the Republic may transmit to the Council, for review and opinion, any question in relation to its attributes. He may, if necessary, convene its meeting.

Article 8:

Permanent commissions are formed – from among its members – to exercise its attributes. They include the following:

- **The commission for civil and political rights.**
- **The commission for social rights.**
- **The commission for economic rights.**
- **The commission for cultural rights.**
- **The legislative commission.**
- **The commission for international relations.**

The Council may also create other commissions comprised of its members, by decision taken by a 2/3 majority of its members.

The secretariat of each commission is carried out by its members. The Commission may ask for assistance from any person whose experience

is deemed useful in the review of submitted subjects, without voting rights.

Article 9:

The Council is given a General Secretariat charged with the performance of Council decisions and the general oversight of the technical secretariat, personnel issues, the Council's finances and administration in accordance with its internal rules of procedure.

The Council appoints the Secretary General from among its members or otherwise He may be appointed for the same term of office as the council.

If the Secretary general is not a council member, he may attend meetings but cannot vote.

Article 10:

The Council is represented by its President for legal matters and in its dealings with third parties.

Article 11:

The Council has an independent budget. It is comprised of revenues and expenditures: The financial year begins and ends with the beginning and ending of the Government's financial year.

Article 12:

The Council's resources are constituted as follows:

- 1- Council credits stipulated in the general budget of the State.
- 2- Donations, legacies and subsidies which the Council decides to accept by at least 2/3 majority of its members.
- 3- Donations and subsidies from the State granted by the State whose transfer to the Council is decided by virtue of the international conventions signed with the State in the fields of human rights.

Article 13:

The Council drafts an annual report on its efforts and its activities, comprising all the proposals that it deems useful in the context of its powers. The Council submits its report to the President of the Republic and to the President of the People's Assembly and the *Shoura*.

Article 14:

The Council drafts its internal rules of procedure as well as the internal rules of procedure of its technical secretariat responsible for personnel issues, finances and administration without being tied by governmental constraints.

Article 15:

The present law will be published in the Official Journal and will come into force on the day after its publication.

The present law is marked by the seal of the Arab Republic of Egypt and will be applied as one of its laws.

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HOSNI MUBARAK

