

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC,  
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Initial reports submitted by States parties under  
articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant

Addendum  
Egypt\*

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\* The information submitted by Egypt in accordance with the guidelines concerning the initial part of reports of States parties is contained in the core document (HRI/CORE/1/Add.19).

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Article 15

The legislative position in regard to recognition of the right to culture and scientific research

237. As stipulated in articles 47, 48 and 49 of the Egyptian Constitution of 1971, the State guarantees freedom of scientific research and literary, artistic and cultural creativity and undertakes to provide the means needed to encourage them. The State also guarantees freedom of opinion and of all means of expression within the limits of the law. Freedom of the press, printing and publication is guaranteed and censorship of newspapers, publications and the information media is prohibited except in time of war or emergency, in matters relating to social harmony or in the interests of national security within the framework defined by law. Following the referendum held on 22 May 1981, new articles were added to the Constitution under which the press was designated as an independent popular authority which discharges its social function in a free and independent manner by various means of expression within the framework of respect for the fundamental constituents of society and for public rights, freedoms and obligations, it being clearly understood that journalists have a right to obtain news and information (arts. 206, 207 and 210).

238. Egyptian legislation is in conformity with those constitutional principles, as can be seen from the following.

239. The Copyright Protection Act No. 354 of 1954. Article 5 of this Act recognizes the exclusive right of authors to disseminate their works, to determine the manner of this dissemination and to exploit their works financially in whatever manner they choose. No third party can exercise this right without prior written authorization from the author or his successor. The Act covers all written, graphic and audiovisual works in circulation, as well as computer programmes, databases and associated research, and this protection also extends to the author's name and to translations. Article 43 stipulates that the author has a right to seek protection from any unauthorized infringement of his copyright by applying for an order from the president of a court of first instance,

who may suspend publication, issue a sequestration order, halt public performance and assess the income due to the author without prejudice to any right of appeal. Article 20 sets the duration of protection at 50 years for literary works and 20 years for computer-related copyright, which is in keeping with the relevant international conventions (Berne and GATT). Article 47 designates infringements of copyright as criminal offences punishable by a fine. Repeated offenders are liable to a penalty of imprisonment and/or a fine, with the possibility of closure, confiscation and publication of the judgement in newspapers at the convicted person's expense. This protection extends even to works published abroad.

240. The Press Regulatory Act No. 96 of 1996. This Act reiterates the constitutional principles concerning the press. Articles 1 and 3 stipulate that the press shall discharge its function in a free and independent manner with a view to creating a free environment for social development and progress through enlightened knowledge, the expression of criticism and the publication of news. Articles 48 prohibit censorship of newspapers except in time of war or emergency or in the interests of national security. It is prohibited to confiscate or suspend the publication of newspapers by administrative means. The right of journalists to obtain and publish information and statistics is recognized.

241. State prizes and international cooperation. In keeping with its commitment to propagate, develop and promote scientific research and creativity in all fields and to encourage international contacts and cooperation, the State awards annual prizes to reward and encourage Egyptians in all cultural, scientific and literary fields. These prizes are governed by the provisions of the following Acts:

(a) Act No. 12 of 1972 concerning civilian medals and decorations. This Act made provision for the award of decorations to persons who render outstanding services to the nation in the field of science, literature, the arts or sports or to outstanding employees of the State. Orders of merit may also be awarded to exceptional performers in these fields or in agriculture, industry, commerce, sports, youth affairs, public service or public order or security;

(b) Act No. 37 of 1958 concerning State prizes for intellectual production and to encourage science, literature, the arts and sociology. This Act, as amended by Act No. 161 of 1980, made provision for 15 prizes to reward merit (known as "State prizes for intellectual production") and 56 incentive prizes (known as "State prizes to encourage science, the arts, literature and sociology") distributed as follows:

	<u>Prizes to reward merit</u>	<u>Incentive prizes</u>
Science	5	32
Sociology	4	6
Literature	3	6
Fine arts	3	6
Law and economics	-	6

The prizes to reward merit are awarded annually to citizens who have distinguished themselves by their intellectual production, while incentive prizes are awarded for the best works in literary and other fields. The prize winners are chosen by specialized committees in accordance with objective rules and on the basis of scientific or academic appraisal;

(c) Act No. 49 of 1984 concerning the State prize for artistic creativity. This Act made provision for the award of a State prize for artistic creativity in the fields of culture and the arts. The prize

winner is entitled to spend up to three years at the Egyptian Academy at Rome at the State's expense in order to benefit from international expertise in the fields of specialization covered by the prize, namely all branches of the fine arts, the history of art, Egyptian archaeology, artistic restoration, literature, music, the cinema and the theatre;

(d) Act No. 132 of 1949 concerning patents and industrial designs and inventions. This Act safeguards patent rights by providing them with legislative protection through official registration, in the holder's name, with the competent authorities so that they can be exploited in the manner determined by the patent holder. Patents are granted in respect of any new industrial invention, design or model. The Act specifies the conditions under which they can be protected and prescribes penalties of imprisonment or fines for infringements of patent rights. Patent holders are entitled to demand application of the provisions of the international conventions concerning industrial property to which Egypt has acceded if such conventions protect their interests more effectively.

#### Egypt's endeavours to develop and promote culture and scientific research

242. Egypt has endeavoured to promote science and culture throughout the ages. It has enjoyed high repute in this regard for thousands of years since the time of the Pharaohs, whose civilization was based on scientific achievements the secrets of which experts are still trying to discover. The Alexandrian library subsequently played a unique role in the postPharaonic period. In fact, this historical and cultural background has left its mark on the mentality and behaviour of the Egyptian people, who are characterized by their love of culture, science, the arts and literature. These characteristics have been firmly implanted, sustained and developed over the ages by Egypt's Pharaonic, Islamic, Coptic and Greek legacy which has been, and will remain, a pole of attraction for tourists and scientists from all parts of the world. This cultural legacy also qualifies Egypt to play a prominent role in this regard at the local, regional and international levels.

243. In Egypt, governmental responsibility for the promotion of culture and science is borne by the Ministry of Information, Culture and Scientific Research. These three aspects are considered in a certain amount of detail below.

#### Information

244. During the last three years 1993-1995, Egypt has made significant progress in extending the scope of audiovisual information services throughout its territory in order to secure every citizen's right of direct access to these services so that everyone can become acquainted with the achievements of modern science, keep abreast of international events and enjoy an appropriate environment conducive to a closer understanding of current situations and future prospects. In general, the aim of Egypt's information media is to provide updated coverage of public problems and promote the exercise of democracy more effectively through dialogue and discussion. The practical implementation of information plans has produced the following results:

(a) There are now eight television channels operating in Egypt, including five regional channels broadcasting from Alexandria, Tsmailiya, the Central Delta, northern Upper Egypt at ElMinya and southern Upper Egypt, in addition to 22 radio stations of which 10 are regional;

(b) In 1994/95, the number of television transmission hours amounted to 39,653 at an average rate of 108 hours per day, as compared with 31,347 hours at an average rate of 91 hours per day during the

preceding year. In 1994/95, the number of regional transmission hours amounted to 23,241 at an average rate of 64 hours per day;

(c) In 1994/95, the average number of radio broadcasting hours amounted to 334 per day, i.e. an annual total of 121,900 hours;

(d) Egypt has established an international Nile TV channel which broadcasts in English and French;

(e) An Egyptian satellite channel has been established and preparations are being made to launch the first Egyptian satellite so that special educational, sports and children's channels can be introduced;

(f) A Media Production City has been established to produce competitive television programmes and increase media production to thousands of hours;

(g) The Egyptian information media have been strengthened through modernization of their installations and equipment, as a result of which the present broadcasting stations have become extremely powerful.

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252. Scientific research. Scientific research, which is one of the three principal vehicles for the diffusion of knowledge and culture, forms an integral part of the Government's plans and concerns. Technological development is one of the cornerstones of the Government's policy, particularly in the field of international cooperation with specialized agencies and foreign States. The Government's policy of promoting the transfer of advanced technology and encouraging Egyptians engaged in scientific research is being implemented by the Ministry of Scientific Research, the national centres and the specialized scientific institutions. The following national research centres and institutes are working in this field:

(a) The Academy of Scientific Research and Technology. This Academy is developing the expertise of scientific staff, providing financial support for scientific theses, conducting national campaigns to improve the principal grain crops (wheat, rice and sorghum) and expanding the base of the local processing industry by promoting the use of local raw materials;

(b) The National Research Centre. This Centre, which operates within the framework of the programme to protect the environment (air, water and soil) of Greater Cairo from pollution, provides guidance and advice in this regard;

(c) The Petroleum Research Institute. This Institute is concerned primarily with the processing of petroleum deposits and petroleum production and transportation services;

(d) The Metal Research and Development Centre. This Centre specializes in the production of the basic spare parts needed for capital goods, the production of minerals and the improvement of their specifications (manganese, white sand, zinc, chromium, cast iron and Egyptian aluminite);

(e) The National Institute for the Marine Sciences and Fisheries. This Institute monitors marine pollution and its effects on fish production and is endeavouring to increase fish production at fish farms and fisheries by developing fishing methods;

(f) The National Institute for Astronomical and Geophysical Research and the National Agency for Remote Sensing and Space Science. Both of these are engaged in the modernization of satellite monitoring stations, the conduct of magnetometric surveys and space research, the preparation of a network to monitor seismic activity and the analysis of satellite data and soil maps;

(g) The Theodor Bilharz Research Institute. This Institute is working within the framework of the plan to eliminate bilharziasis, epidemic hepatitis, nonpulmonary tuberculosis and Fasciola and is engaged in research to treat these diseases;

(h) The Electronic Research Institute. This Institute is working on the computerization of the spinning and weaving industry and the compilation of databases on the relevant professional associations and scientific relations;

(i) The Ophthalmic Research Institute. This Institute is working within the framework of the national campaign to eliminate the eye diseases that affect children of primary school age with a view to monitoring and improving the methods and results of treatment;

(j) The National Standardization Institute. This Institute is engaged in quality control and verification of specifications, weights and measures in all fields of production and services.

253. The Mubarak Scientific Research, Applications and Technology City, which will cover all fields of scientific research, is one of the most important projects currently being implemented by the Government. Interim plans are also being made to develop and modernize the existing network of scientific research institutes.

#### Freedom of scientific research and creative activity

254. As already indicated, Egypt's Constitution and legal system guarantee freedom of scientific research and creative activity, as well as freedom of publication. This freedom is a natural reflection of the democratic climate on which the country's system of government is based.

255. In Egypt, freedom of scientific research, creative activity and publication is not subject to any restrictions other than those provided for by law in order to preserve the freedoms, rights and obligations of others, protect privacy, maintain public order and security and protect public morals from pornographic or irreligious publications.

256. The rule of law and the independence of the judiciary constitute a fundamental safeguard against any infringement of this right and against any practices prejudicial to third parties in the light of the general rules already referred to in Part One of this report.

#### International cooperation

257. Scientific research, cultural and literary activity, the information media and the various arts are undoubtedly among the most successful fields of international cooperation since the exchange of experience and fair competition are the two wings on which talents can rise to new horizons of creativity and innovation through the enhancement of skills and abilities.

258. Egypt believes that international cooperation in these fields is the only way to achieve overall development and ensure that future generations will be capable of absorbing and benefiting from modern scientific techniques in all fields. Some important fields of such cooperation are mentioned below:

259. Archaeology. In Egypt, the discovery, excavation and restoration of antiquities is an important field to which special attention is paid in the international cooperation programmes that are implemented through international organizations, bilateral agreements with other States and scientific missions. International cooperation in this field covers the establishment and development of museums, completion of the rescue of the Nubian monuments and the restoration of numerous Islamic, Coptic and Pharaonic monuments.

260. Cultural relations. Egypt holds international, regional and national arts festivals and participates in those held abroad. It also organizes international book and art exhibitions, participates in those held abroad, hosts foreign artistic delegations and organizes Egyptian weeks for the display of local art and literature in foreign States. In addition, there is an exchange of media, artistic and literary production with other countries throughout the world and literary works are also translated.