

# UNDP DOWNPLAYS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN EGYPT

ACHRS STATEMENT | MEREL COSIJN



**After years of demonstrated human rights violations in Egypt, Amnesty, Cairo Institute for Human Rights and HRW are astonished by the misleading UNDP report. With this, UNDP fails the UN human rights-based approach to human development and loses reliability. ACHRS condemns this misleading report and urges Egyptian authorities to amend civil society laws.**

Amnesty International, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, and Human Rights Watch joined forces in expressing their discontent with the outcome of the Egypt Human Development Report by the UNDP. "The report masks the structural impediments to human development in Egypt and ignores the UN's human rights-based approach to human development," the three organizations state in their letter.

Egypt is known for violating human rights for years on end, as shown from the ACHRS Weekly Press Reviews. Also, the letter to UNDP states: "The Egyptian government routinely denies and distorts the truth about the ongoing human rights crisis in Egypt, despite the scale and severity of human rights violations." In whitewashing these violations, Egypt gets rewarded for false progress.

This is the second time this week that Human Rights Watch has spoken up about concerns regarding Egypt. Earlier this week, the human rights watchdog posted about their concerns regarding Egypt as host for next year's climate summit, COP27. The dismay arose from the penalization of peaceful social assembly and imprisonment of civil society activists and human rights defenders on a large scale. In their own words, HRW states that Egypt is currently perpetuating a profound human rights crisis.

Both Human Rights Watch articles imply undeserved praise of Egypt. Moreover, the three human rights organizations laid out the fact that a United Nations branch has failed to respect their fundamental principles. This not only looks bad for the organization's trustworthiness, but also generates a path for the repetition of human rights violations: the report contradicts the findings of other United Nations agencies, which then apparently go unpunished. This goes against their own principal rule: promote accountability and integrity and provide impartial and reliable information.

It is unacceptable for such a model organization to publish these kinds of reports, because of the severe consequences this may have for the respect of universal human rights. Therefore,

ACHRS condemns the whitewashing of human rights violations by anyone, but especially by a United Nations organ. We urge the organization to address this issue and amend the Egypt Human Development report accordingly. In addition, ACHRS also urges Egypt to respect and protect human rights, instead of being proud of a masqued report. For starters, ACHRS encourages Egypt to amend their laws on civil society, to be an appropriate host for next year's COP27.