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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association, a non- governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[6 February 2019]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



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Comment on the report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing on the results of her visit to Egypt

Presented to: 40th Session of HRC

Presented by: Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights (In special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations)

Date: Feb. & Mar. 2019

About: Item 3, the report of the special Rapporteur on adequate housing

Preface

Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights (Egypt) presents this report to clarify its comment on the most important points in the report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing on the results of her visit to Egypt from 24th Sep. until 3rd Oct. 2018. This is the first visit of a United Nations human rights expert to Egypt Since 2011.

In the context of Egypt's openness to cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and its willingness to identify international expertise in dealing with the challenges faced by countries to provide adequate housing, the Egyptian government called Ms. Leilani Farha, the Special Rapporteur to visit Egypt from September 24 to October 3 last year. Although all the possible means were available for her to do her work, but the report issued many reservations. She checked and saw in her meetings and various visits the practical applications of government policies to provide adequate housing. However, Her statement was not accurate as it didn't mention many positive practices and policies adopted by the Egyptian government in the field of providing adequate housing for citizens.

Her recent report discussed the challenges of human rights resulting from the coexistence of old and new rent systems and the role of municipalities in the realization of the right to housing and homelessness including street children. The report also included those who felt that their right to adequate housing had been violated, and their ability to access to Justice. As well as, it focused on the role of international development assistance and housing issues in Sinai, as well issues of Nubian peoples. Not only that but the report also discussed the right to full enjoyment of the right to housing for persons with disabilities, women and other minorities. She stressed that in order to meet Egypt's obligations under target 11 of the 2030 sustainable development goals, the Egyptian government should go through some steps. For instance, hold a consultative process; develop a national housing plan based on the main principles of human rights; provide citizens in the event of unavoidable evacuation for development area either compensation option Or integration.¹

Egyptian Reaction on the report

The report and the press statement of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing were received by the Egyptian foreign ministry's condemnation of the report. The ministry confirmed that the Special Rapporteur seeks to fabricate slander about the Egyptian policies in the field of providing adequate housing for citizens. As well, her statement indicates the lack of knowledge of Egyptian policies in providing suitable housing for citizens, and the development of informal and unsafe areas. **In a statement issued by the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning the report, stressed that:**

- The report did not mention the Government's achievements in providing adequate housing for citizens, and the progressive and bold decisions taken by the Government to achieve a qualitative shift in housing policies to ensure decent living

¹ حسن الاسكندراني، الام المتحدة تطالب بإلغاز المصريين من ايدي السيسي، موقع الحرية والعدالة، ديسمبر 2018، [/الأمم-المتحدة-تطلب-بلغاء-المصريين-من-الرابط](http://fj-p.com/الام-المتحدة-تطلب-بلغاء-المصريين-من-الرابط)

and adequate and safe housing for all without discrimination. That Policies were appreciated and praised by many relevant international organizations.

- The Special Rapporteur did not mention the existence of a government plan to create around 600,000 units for social housing. 300,000 units have already been completed in record time and another 300,000 are being completed to meet the needs of low-income people in accordance with the highest quality standards. With 5% of these projects specialized for the disabled. As well as, The great effort to develop the medium and distinctive housing within the framework of a long-term strategic vision to expand the residential area and reduce population density.
- Around 46 unsafe slums have been developed inside and outside Cairo in order to protect the lives of their residents. Besides taking care to protect citizens' rights either by providing them with temporary housing until the completion of the development of the targeted area or by providing fair compensation, or by proposing alternatives such as moving to a new city, Consistent with local laws and Egypt's international obligations.
- The threat contained in her statement to stop the Special Rapporteurs from dealing with Egypt is completely rejected and is an exceed of her mandate. the Egyptian government will not be lenient in following up closely until she bear full responsibility for these deviant actions and the magnitude of its repercussions. Especially, by taking into account that such an international post necessarily assumes the person should be known by integrity, professionalism and independence.²

Maat Association's Comment

Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights confirms its reservation to the report of the special rapporteur on adequate housing on the results of her visit to Egypt. Maat notices that the special rapporteur did not take into account that the governmental policies in the provision of adequate housing for citizens reflected a great care for the rights of citizens. The government help them either by providing them with temporary accommodation until the completion of the development of the target area or by providing fair compensation or by proposing alternatives such as moving to a new city in accordance with local laws and Egypt's international obligations. Moreover, the social housing project adopted by the Egyptian authority is the largest project in the world. It has already begun to implement one million housing units in all governorates and new cities. That's due to the government's great care, represented by the Ministry of Housing, to provide an apartment for every limited-income citizen. The project will not be limited to the implementation of a million housing units only, but also continuing until the eradication of the housing crisis. In addition, The organization deplored the videotaped intervention by the Special Rapporteur with Qatari channel Al-Jazeera, which is known to support terrorism, following the release of her statement on the results of her visit to Egypt, as this intervention raises many reservations.³

Maat therefore recommends that:

- To review the report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on her visit to Egypt and re-evaluating of the Egyptian policies in the area of housing.
- The UN experts who responsible for country visits impartially should be neutral and have the ability to conduct a comprehensive assessment of state policies. As well,

² بالعربي، 6 ديسمبر 2018، الرابط، CNN مقررة أممية بعد زيارة مصر، أنا في صدمة .. والقاهرة : تهديدها مرفوض، موقع - <https://arabic.cnn.com/middle-east/article/2018/12/06/un-visit-egypt-shock-cairo-its-threat-rejected>

³ مداخلة المقررة الخاصة بالسكن اللاقى على الجزيرة القطرية، الرابط،

الأمم المتحدة-مصر-ليلاني-فرحة-إخلاء-قسري-جزيرة-الوراق-حقوق-الإنسان/4/<https://www.aljazeera.net/news/politics/2018/12/4/>

taking into account not only one dimension but all governmental and other (civil society and citizens ...) perspectives also, when evaluating.

- The Egyptian government should follow further procedures and take further actions that will protect the rights of citizens to find decent housing. In addition to providing alternative housing in the case of the development of slums and unsafe areas.

Achieving the goal 11 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Plan quickly, to get inclusive and secure cities in which citizens can find decent housing as an integral part of human rights.
