



Arab Republic of Egypt
Ministry of Solidarity and
Social Justice

From: Ambassador Ahmed Abulkheir – advisor to the Minister for external Affairs

To: The Secretariat of the United Nations

Office of High Commissioner of Human Rights – Geneva

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(20 pages including cover page)

Ministry of Solidarity and Social Justice
Central Department for Social Welfare
General Department for Family and Childhood
Seniors' Division

National Report on Senior Citizens' Rights in the Arab Republic of Egypt

I. First issue (analytical review to male/female seniors' situation, including the challenges and threats that may hinder their access to their rights):-

1. Seniors' Demographic Status: -

— Retirement Concept in Egypt :

➤ Employees generally retire at the age of 60 with some exceptions where employees retire at the age of 70 or a bit earlier such as (members of judiciary, universities staff and researchers at the research centers). There are various retirement systems like:

— The early retirement system due to the privatization policy.

— Retirement upon the completion of twenty - year service period.

➤ Members of the Armed Forces and Police retire before the age of sixty.

➤ Retirement at the age of 50 or 55

➤ Thus, there is no standard age for retirement valid for all the State authorities and bodies.

— Concepts and laws in Egypt do not differentiate between (male or female) seniors when passing any policy related to seniors' welfare and development.

— Demographic Indicators and Future Trends :

- Rates and statistical indicators of the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics indicate that the long-lived population phenomenon in Egypt is the result of a demographic transition process associated with the neonates (fertility) rate and mortality rate. The lower the rates are, the lower the young people rate and the higher seniors' (60 +) rate will be. This leads to shifting the community from a youngsters, youth community into a decaying, aging community.
- The change in age structure of population forms the basis for planning programs. The variables include the long-lived phenomenon represented in the increase of senior individuals' rate and the decrease of youngsters' rate hence raising the age average accordingly – this phenomenon is being analyzed through **three projections and hypothesis** as shown below:
 - Setting age fertility rates to 1960 levels throughout the projection period while reducing mortality rates for the first fifty years gradually
 - Reducing age fertility rates for fifty years, while mortality rates remained on the same age levels of 1960
 - The gradual reduction of both fertility and mortality levels at the same time which result in less reduction in children's proportion and less increase in the percentage of other age groups
 - Thus, it is concluded that the decline in mortality rate and its reverse effect has prevented the Egyptian society from becoming more youthful due to the increase of the long-lived group rate.

- According to various censuses, there is a regular rise in the numbers of senior citizens (60+) from 1.100.000 in 1947 Census to 3.400.000 in 1996 census and then to **3.4 million** at present - the proportion of seniors to the total population ranged between 6.1% in 1947 and 5.8% in 1996 to 6.3% today. The numbers and proportion of senior citizens are expected to rise systematically starting from now to reach 11.500.000 (11%) in 2025 and about 24.000.000 (21%) in 2050.
- Latest population statistics bulletins issued by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics - as the official authority concerned with population statistics in Egypt - confirms the increase in seniors' rate to 7% of total population.

II. Second issue on the current legislation, laws, resolutions and programs on the protection and promotion of seniors' human rights:-

1 – Seniors' rights to social insurance:

- Law 79 / 1975, and the amended laws thereof, as mentioned above:
- Law 25/1977 on amending some provisions of the social insurance law
- Law 32/1978 on amending some provisions of the social insurance law
- Law 93/1980 on amending some provisions of the social insurance law

- Law 61/1981 on pensions increase and amending some provisions of the social insurance law
 - Law 112/1980 on comprehensive social insurance
- The law adjudicates disbursing security pensions - through the Social Insurance Fund for the governmental sector and the Insurance and Pensions Fund for the public and private sectors in the following cases: (aging, disability and death– work injuries– illness– unemployment– social welfare for pension beneficiaries)atop of this pension beneficiaries’ list come senior citizens . Thus, article 17 of part III chapter 1on aging, disability and death insurance – obliges employers to pay 15% of the insured monthly wages to the Social Security System
- While article 18 of chapter 2 “ pensions and compensations” indicate terminating the insured service upon reaching the retirement age stipulated upon in the current employment law or for reaching the age of 60
 - Ministerial Decree 218 /1990: establishes for senior citizen s’ right to recreational welfare services through day care clubs of seniors.
 - Ministerial Decree 90 /1997: establishes for senior citizens’ right to sheltering welfare for those who have no family care providers, through senior citizens’ sheltering institutions based on his/her economic and social circumstances.
 - Issuance of health insurance law 75/1964, which allows seniors’ access to free medical and therapeutic care.

- Issuance of social security law 30/1977 amended by law 87/2000: under which seniors who are not entitled for security pensions can benefit from the aging pension.
- Issuance of Republican Decree 77/1981 on: providing facilities and discounts for senior citizens on the means of transportations, airways, theaters, bazaars, and exhibitions tickets ...etc.
- Issuance of Republican Decree 591/1982 on: increasing the discount rate on railway tickets for pensioners

III. Third issue on the current legislations, programs and policies related to combating discrimination among senior citizens:

Status of seniors' participation in public life:

Seniors right to participate in political life:

Egyptian constitution allows all citizens to participate in political and parliamentary life without excluding certain age groups, hence, law allows senior citizens to participate in public elections with no discrimination based on age or gender. Furthermore, most peoples' representatives in the local/public councils and departments are seniors (i.e. **above the age of 60**)

Contribution to the social development process: -

Contribution can be shown as follows:

Seniors' welfare activities such as the sheltering/ accommodation houses and day care clubs, which train seniors who have no occupation or profession on some handcrafts with

financial revenue, as well as allowing him/her to play a role in developing his community.

— The productive families' project offered seniors an access to small and micro soft loans through Nasser Social Bank and the Social Fund, with minor interest rates and payment facilities to help them establish their own small enterprises.

— Utilizing seniors' accumulative experiences by occupying their leisure time with a promotional paid job i.e. hiring those with teaching experience in illiteracy wiping and remedial classes for the different school stages, likewise all seniors who have professional experiences.

— Law 84/2002 on regulating the work of NGOs and private foundations, allowed senior citizens to participate in the management of some NGOs, run projects related thereto and utilizing their capabilities, it is worth noting here that most NGOs boards in Egypt consist of seniors.

IV. Fourth issue on the current legislations, policies and programs concerned with combating violence against senior citizens:

— Egyptian laws and legislations incriminated practicing violence or abuse against all community groups including Seniors.

— Seniors attain a privileged status within their families in the Egyptian society which values the family significance and seek to strengthen ties among family members – seniors participate in raising their grand children, they also pass their educational experience to their children,

and are also regarded as the source of tenderness and protection for their grandchildren.

- Seniors in rural/Bedouin areas also attain a remarkable position in their communities and families as this is considered a sort of cherishing values and traditions. Also the work of institutive councils is usually based on the seniors' efforts, they have a judicial authority, their judgments are binding to all the younger age groups and they take the responsibility of enforcing the effective norms in such areas.
- Egyptian society considers seniors as heritage and the voice of history because they were witnesses on certain historical events. Thus youth draw experiences and historical knowledge from them
- Customs and traditions also play a significant role in crystallizing senior's status since the Egyptian society has well - established customs and traditions specially in Upper Egypt which forbids admitting one (or both) of the parents to seniors' accommodation houses. Thus, this service is not very popular in Upper Egypt governorates

V. Fifth issue on the current legislations, policies and programs related to specific services and facilities of seniors and primary health care:

- Issuance of health insurance law 75/1964 which allows senior to benefit from a continuous free medical and therapeutic care until after retirement

- Issuance of Ministerial Decree 40/1997 which provides seniors with access to the services of physiotherapy and physical fitness at cut-rate fees in comparison to other places.
- Launching special departments for seniors' care and treatment by some universities such as: (the Geriatrics Unit at Ain Shams University, the Seniors Care Center at Cairo University and the Social and Health care at Helwan University... etc)

VI. Sixth issue on the current legislations, policies and programs related to social protection measures, employment right and the right to benefit from social security:

- Issuance of law 30/1977 and amending ministerial decrees thereto:
- Under this law, article 6 (part II) defines eligible groups for this pension that include aging pension, under which seniors above the age of 65 who do not receive insurance pensions are entitled to benefit from this pension
- Furthermore, this law entitles seniors to receive financial assistances in lump - sum system in some cases
- Seniors' welfare activities such as sheltering/accommodation houses and day care clubs where they train seniors who have no occupation or profession on some handcrafts which benefit seniors financially in addition to giving him/her the chance to play a role in developing his community

- seniors are granted small and micro soft loans through Nasser Social Bank and the social fund at minor interest rates and payment facilities to establish their own small enterprises
- Utilizing seniors' accumulative experiences by occupying the leisure time with a paid developmental job through hiring seniors with teaching experiences in illiteracy wiping classes and remedial classes for school students in different stages, likewise all seniors who have professional experiences
- Utilizing their capabilities in running some of the NGOs and projects thereof.
- Law 84/2002 on regulating the work of NGOs and private foundations, allowed senior citizens to participate in the management of some NGOs, run projects related thereto and utilizing their capabilities, it is worth noting here that most NGOs boards in Egypt consist of seniors.

VII. Seventh issue on current legislations, policies and programs related to gathering, analyzing and updating information systematically according to age:-

Ministry of Solidarity and Social Justice in coordination with the National Centre for Social and Criminological Researches conduct researches and field studies on senior citizens to identify the most significant problems and issues they may face, as well as, recognizing their needs and demands which are considered their legal rights so that decision makers can include projects aiming at fulfilling these needs and demands –

it is worth mentioning here that the National Centre for Social and Criminological Researches is currently implementing a project aiming at improving seniors' welfare services in cooperation with the Ministry, the project consists of three axes:

First: Studying the current status of institutional welfare to identify the negative aspects.

Second: Finding means to correct such negative aspects.

Future vision: Aims at out-reaching all services of the Ministry of Solidarity and Social Justice to all seniors in the different environments right to their house doors.

VIII. Eights issue on the current legislations, policies and programs related to promoting male/female seniors' effective participation in the community and in the political/cultural life:
Seniors' right to participate in political life:-

Egyptian constitution allows all citizens to participate in political and parliamentary life without excluding certain age groups, hence law allows senior citizens to participate in public elections with no discrimination based on age or gender, furthermore most peoples' representatives in local/public councils and departments are senior citizens (above the age of 60).

Seniors' right to participate in social development:-

Represented in the following:

Seniors' welfare activities such as sheltering / accommodation houses and day care clubs where they train seniors who have no occupation or profession on some handcrafts which benefit the senior financially in addition to giving him/her the chance to play a role in developing his community.

- Seniors are granted small and micro soft loans through Nasser Social Bank and the Social Fund at minor interest rates with payment facilities to help them establish their own small enterprises.
- Utilizing seniors' accumulative experiences by occupying their leisure time with a promotional paid job i.e. hiring those with teaching experience in illiteracy wiping and remedial classes for the different school stages, likewise all seniors who have professional experiences
- Utilizing their capabilities in running some NGOs and the projects thereof.

Senior Citizens from a family/community perspective:

- Seniors attain a privileged status within their families in the Egyptian society which values the family significance and seek to strengthen ties among family members – seniors participate in raising their grand children, they also pass their educational experience to their children, and are also regarded as the source of tenderness and protection for their grandchildren.
- Seniors in rural/Bedouin areas also attain a remarkable position in their communities and families as this is considered a sort of cherishing values and traditions. Also the work of institutive councils is usually based on the seniors' efforts, they have a judicial authority, their judgments are binding to all the younger age groups and they take the responsibility of enforcing the effective norms in such areas.

- Egyptian society considers seniors as heritage and the voice of history because they were witnesses on certain historical events. Thus youth draw experiences and historical knowledge from them
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Role of religious values in guiding towards providing care for seniors:

Religious values play a significant role in the Egyptian society in guiding children towards honoring their parents and treating them kindly, as Egyptian society considers religious values included in the holy books, which sanctified parents-children relation, an approach governing interaction among individuals and children – parents' relation that positively affects ways of dealing with parents kindly. Moreover, holy books call for the necessity of showing respect and reverence towards seniors. Yet, social/ economic changes, living costliness and narrow houses created a kind of relative negligence to these values.

- IX. Ninth issue on the current legislations, policies and programs related to justice realization and reaching legal solutions to seniors' rights violation, including delegation of arbitrators assigned to specific tasks by institutions such as the

National Institutions for Human Rights to defend seniors' rights:-

Some NGOs are concerned with this issue, which defend seniors in judicial forums when subjected to violation of their rights in a collective manner, such as the Pensioners Welfare Society and the Post-Retirement Welfare Society.