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Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt
to the United Nations Office
of International Organisations
in Geneva



البعثة الدائمة لجمهورية مصر العربية
لدى الأمم المتحدة
والمنظمات الدولية
في جنيف

URGENT & CONFIDENTIAL

CHAN. Year 2013 . 054

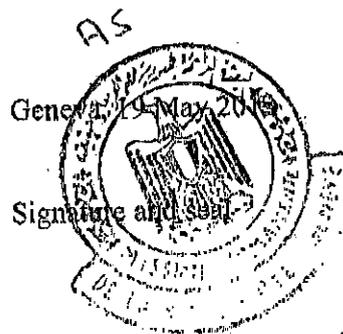
The Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR-Special Procedures Branch), and with reference to your fax dated March 20th 2013 regarding the Joint Allegation Letter Assembly & Association (2010-1) G/SO (107-9) G/SO (89-15) EGY 5/2013, has the honor to attach herewith the reply of the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt on the aforementioned letter of allegation, and looks forward that the enclosed information be duly reflected in the relevant communications report to be submitted to the Human Rights Council.

The Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the assurances of its highest consideration.

OHCHR REGISTRY

21 MAY 2013

Recipients: SPD
S. Liebert



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Responses by the
Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt
On the Joint Allegation Letter Assembly & Association (2010-1) G/SO
(107-9) G/SO (89-15) EGY 5/2013

- 1- Several drafts of the law are currently in circulation, which were drafted by the Government, the Shura Council, political parties and civil society. In preparing the draft, technical expertise of the Venice Commission was sought, along with the support of the United Nations Development Programme, and the Government will continue to consult with the relevant expert bodies and agencies that demonstrate the highest standards of professionalism, objectivity and neutrality.
- 2- The Government of Egypt also wishes to reiterate that all drafts are being concurrently considered in an open societal debate, and it would therefore be premature and unwise to prejudge the outcome. Custodial penalties, for example, were removed in the latest revisions of the Government draft, and many other changes are still under discussion. However, Article 51 of Egypt's new constitution will always remain the benchmark for any final text, hence ensuring citizen's right to freedom of association, in full respect of Egypt's obligations under Article 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, both in spirit and letter.
- 3- In the same context, we wish to express our astonishment regarding the press release issued by the Special Rapporteur on freedom of Association and Peaceful Assembly, and the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Opinion, jointly with the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders in relation to the same matter on the 28th of March 2013, without waiting for the period allocated for receiving the necessary clarifications from the Government to be exhausted.
- 4- We intend to continue to provide updates on the status of the national debate on this issue, and truly hope that the imprecise assessment of this subject will be remedied in an expeditious manner, convinced that a positive and constructive dialogue with the Special Mandate Holders of the HRC is still the most successful way to develop a comprehensive and precise understanding of any issue in relation to their respective mandates.