



# **Organisation Franco-Egyptienne pour les Droits de l'Homme**

*Franco-Egyptian Organization for Human Rights*

*منظمة فرنكو ايجبسيان لحقوق الانسان – اوفيد*

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## ***Working Session 7: Freedom of Religion or Belief***

**Egypt:** A new Constitution for a new era – Freedom of Conscience – Protection from Sharia law

**OSCE State Members:** Exportation of fanaticism and violence

- On 30<sup>th</sup> June 2013 Egypt made what the population now calls “our Second Revolution”. This day 30 million demonstrators went to the street demanding President Morsi to step down. This led to his destitution few days later. Muslims and Christians went through this revolution hand in hand in the most peaceful way, and there was no bloodshed. The destitution of the Islamist president was the will of Egyptians.
- The army only accomplished what they were asked to do : rescue the revolution and protect the populations from violence and terrorism.
- Today Egypt is on its path to a new era, but has to engage a war against terrorism, since the Moslem Brotherhood still don't accept the fact that Egyptians do not want segregation and hate.
- The majority of the Egyptians are Moslems but Egypt has one of the oldest and largest Christian communities in the region, the Copts. They are suffering segregation since the 1971 constitution stipulating in its article no.2 that Egypt is an Arabic Moslem country, and the sharia is “one of the sources” of the legislation.
- This article was rendered more radical in 1981 by stipulating the Sharia principles as “the main source” of the legislation. This meant that non-Muslims are second-class citizens submitted to the sharia laws. It also meant that most of the agreements and international conventions on the Human Rights signed by Egypt are not entirely applied. This is not concerning only the minorities but also the women and child rights. ***Moreover, there is no possibility for freedom of conscience***
- At this moment, Egypt is rewriting its constitution, which is a considerable chance to finally join the international standards, in terms of citizen rights. Egypt's success could be a model for the whole Mediterranean region, initiating an era of development and progress.
- If the new constitution does ensure the protection from the Sharia “undefined term” and the possibility of its various and contradictory interpretations, the country will not reach its stability, fanaticism and radicalism will continue to spread in the Middle East and to be exported to the western countries and the OSCE member states.

### **Recommendation to the Delegations, NGO, OSCE, ODIHR**

OFEDH is recommending OSCE and the European community to watch the out coming drafts of Egypt's new constitution, and check its Human Rights matching, as understood within the United Nations International Treaties and conventions