

Egyptian Minister of Manpower and Migration issued statement granting Freedom of Association in Egypt

In an official statement, the Egyptian Minister of Manpower and Migration, H.E. Mr. Ahmed El Borai, announced that freedom of association, which guarantees that all trade unions will be registered and can freely pursue their legitimate activities will be recognised in Egypt. (In Arabic)

English Translation:

Egypt was one of the first states to join the International Labor Organization (ILO), upon its establishment in the year 1919; as well as the United Nations organization, upon its establishment in 1946; and

Out of its belief in the notion stated by the "Universal Declaration on Human Rights", announced by the United Nations in 1948, after the ending of the two fierce World Wars 1&2, and which stated that "Human Rights are God Given Rights"; Egypt took the initiation to ratify the said declaration, acknowledging its content and committing itself to adhering to and respecting all the norms and rights such declaration awarded to all the Human Community; with no bias and/or discrimination.

In addition, Egypt was -all along its modern history- an active and effective member in discussing, promoting, ratifying and implementing a large number of international conventions and declarations, aimed at the protection and well being of all human kind groups; and -more specifically- those concerned with the well being and protection of workers; and which empower them to obtain and maintain their legitimate rights, and to -freely and with dignity- practice such rights.

There for,

In the year 1948, Egypt ratified the international convention No. 87, concerning "The Freedom of Association and the Protection of the right of Organization"; and

In 1949, Egypt ratified the international convention No. 98, on "The Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining";

In addition, in 1981 Egypt ratified the international pact on "Economic, Social and Cultural Rights";

Moreover, in 1998 and -as an active member state of both, the United Nations and the International Labor Organization- Egypt committed itself to adhere to ILO's Declaration on the "Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work"; which laid the foundations for "International Labor Standards";

Furthermore, and on the internal/national level, the Egyptian constitution of 1971 came out, embedding article No. (56), announcing "The Right to Establish Trade Unions" on free and democratic grounds.

Thus,

By the mere fact of having ratified all the above mentioned international conventions, pacts and declarations;

In addition to having acknowledged the principles set by the "Committee on the Freedom of Association"; and

According to the provisions of the Egyptian Constitution; and

Acting upon its International Obligations;

Egypt has -on both the national and the international levels- committed itself to the principle of "The Freedom of Association"; hence

If the ratification of such conventions and declarations have marked the Egyptian Commitment to Workers' rights and their freedom of Association;

We should, by far, acknowledge that: the rise of the Glorious Revolution of the 25th of January has given such commitment a whole new dimension;

For, the said revolution has brought into the ground of reality the launching of "Individual Rights and Freedoms"; in all their kinds and forms.

Consequently;

The Ministry of Manpower and Migration Announces its action plan concerning the

"Freedom of Association" by declaring the following principles:

The full and perfect acknowledgement of the right of all workers, to establish and form their own associations; and to join unions of their choices.

The complete independence and autonomy of Trade Unions, in all what concerns their internal matters; including -but not limited to- the set-up of their rules and regulations, the disbursement of their finances and the free and fair election of their leaderships.

The right of all trade unions to form their own federations and to join international federations.

The full autonomy and independence of all trade unions, away from the supervision of the competent authority (the Ministry of Manpower and Migration); as -from now on- the role of such ministry shall be limited to receiving the pertinent registry documents from the trade unions, in return for a receipt (i.e. the unions shall just deposit their documents in the custody of the MOMM); in addition to undertaking the necessary procedures, in order to enable the said unions enjoy their moral personalities; and -freely-practice their work.

Provided that, such procedures shall, only, be temporary; until the laws of association are amended; then, it is anticipated that the court circuits within which the headquarters of the association / union fall, will be the competent authority where such documents are to be deposited.

In the meantime, the Ministry of Manpower and Migration is in the process of studying the ways by means of which the unions will -freely and independently- and away from the supervision of the Ministry will undertake the management of their elections. Provided that, the MOMM intends to consult with the unions in this regards.

The above listed procedures shall all be transmitted to the Ministry's affiliated directorates; to be put into force as of the date the standing declaration is announced.