



EGYPT PARLIAMENT WATCH



WEEK IN BRIEF JULY 29–AUGUST 11, 2018

Summary

- Representative Haytham al-Hariri faced another investigation by the Ethics Committee after conducting an interview with the media outlet al-Araby al-Jadeed, deemed a sponsor of the Muslim Brotherhood by his colleagues in parliament. Hariri criticized Egypt's economic reform program and the \$12 billion International Monetary Fund loan, which was denounced by other representatives.
- Masoum Marzouq, former ambassador and current People's Alliance Party president, criticized the judiciary and called for a referendum on regime policies, prompting outrage in the legislature. Representatives accused Marzouq of promoting terrorist beliefs and requested that he face trial for his comments.

Notable Developments

Representative Haytham al-Hariri Facing Additional Legal Scrutiny:

Representative Haytham al-Hariri's hearing before the Ethics Committee was **postponed** to a date to be determined because of the number of committee members abroad who would not be in attendance at the hearing, though Hariri faces further legal scrutiny after **conducting** an interview with the media outlet al-Araby al-Jadeed. Hariri reportedly **discredited** the country's economic program and the success of the \$12 billion IMF loan; his comments were denounced by multiple members of the House of Representatives. Representatives, notably **Muhammad al-Husseini**, criticized Hariri for appearing on what they deemed a program sponsored by the Muslim Brotherhood, adding that he **deserves** the most severe punishment for his actions. Multiple representatives, including Representative Ehab al-Tamawi, **expect** Hariri to be referred to the Ethics Committee again.

Former Political Official's Critical Comments Stir Outrage:

People's Alliance Party President Masoum Marzouq, who is also a former ambassador, [posted](#) on social media rejecting recent judicial decisions, especially the Tiran and Sanafir agreement, while also calling for a referendum on President Abdel-Fattah El Sisi's policies. Marzouq's criticism was met with outrage by members of the House, who [declared](#) his comments a threat to national security. Multiple representatives, including Representatives [Muhammad al-Ghoul](#) and [Yehia Kedwani](#), accused Marzouq of speaking for the Muslim Brotherhood and promoting terrorist ideology. Other representatives, notably [Mortada Mansour](#), called for a formal [investigation](#) and punishment to be issued against Marzouq. Meanwhile, Parliamentary Spokesman Salah Hassiballah [dismissed](#) Marzouq's comments, saying his criticism held insignificant political weight. The People's Alliance Party currently does not hold any seats in the House.

Nation's Future President Provides Update on Party Developments:

Nation's Future Party President Ashraf Rashad [conducted](#) an interview with *al-Shorouk* in which he spoke about recent developments within the party. Rashad [asserted](#) that the party will gain Sisi's favor by supporting his policies and through the organization's majority status within the House. Rashad also [noted](#) that the party is studying the amendment process for parliament's bylaws, specifically in regard to Article 6, which prohibits representatives from changing party affiliation once elected. For the fourth legislative session, which begins in October, Rashad aspires for the party to [gain](#) chairmanship positions in at least half of the House's committees. Rashad also mentioned that the party will continue to [monitor](#) developments pertaining to Free Egyptians Party (FEP) Chairman Essam Khalil's threat to seek Representative Alaa Abed's removal from the legislature. Formerly of the FEP, Abed [resigned](#) from the party and became one of the vice presidents of Nation's Future.

Representatives Ahmed Abdel Tawab Dies After Illness Complications:

Representative Ahmed Abdel Tawab of the Defense Committee [died](#) July 29 after experiencing [complications](#) with a [preexisting illness](#); Abdel Tawab had reportedly been in a coma for several weeks. According to Article 25 of the House's bylaws, Speaker of the House Ali Abdel 'Al must [announce](#) Abdel Tawab's seat as vacated before the National Elections Authority begins organizing a special election for the position.

Other Developments

In Legislation:

Representative Muhammad Salim of the Constitutional Affairs Committee [submitted](#) an amendment to the Building Law that would outlaw construction on certain urban lands, properties without a general land plan, or agricultural land, unless the building is intended to support the public benefit. The bill will be included as part of the fourth legislative session.

Representative Yehia Kedwani [submitted](#) a bill amending the penal code that would increase the punishment for assaulting a public official to a fine of 10,000 Egyptian pounds (LE) and a prison term of at least one year. The bill will be included in the fourth legislative session.

In Session:

Representative Khaled Khalfallah of the Defense Committee [submitted](#) a briefing request to the Ministry of Youth and Sports to develop a youth center in al-Qumana village in Qena.

Representative Khaled Hilali [submitted](#) a briefing request to Prime Minister Mustafa Madbouli and the Ministry of Transportation regarding the deteriorating road conditions near the sports center in Kafr al-Sheikh.

Representative Muhammad Fuad of the Budget Committee [submitted](#) a briefing request to Abdel 'Al, Madbouli, and the Health Ministry to investigate ongoing claims of malpractice and financial impropriety at the Abbasiya Psychiatric Hospital; the hospital was subject to a parliamentary [investigation](#) earlier this year for similar claims.

The Arab Affairs Committee [issued](#) a statement expressing its approval of the meeting between Sisi and Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al-Nahyan as an attempt to strengthen relations between the two countries.

Representative Ehab Ghatati of the Agriculture Committee [submitted](#) a briefing request to Madbouli and the Ministry of Local Development regarding the water shortage around the pyramids.

Representative Raif Tamraz [submitted](#) a briefing request to Madbouli and the Ministry of Transportation in regard to the roadway system in Sharqia.

Representative Tadrus Qaldus of the Communications Committee [submitted](#) a briefing request to Madbouli in regard to the multitude of stray dogs in urban areas.

In News and Statements:

Parliamentary Spokesman Salah Hassiballah [stated](#) that the legislature postponed a final vote to drop Representative Sahar al-Hawiri's membership because of a lack of quorum in session. Hassiballah [added](#) that Representative Khaled Bashir's membership will be voted on during the fourth legislative session, though he did not disclose a reason.

Wafd Party spokesman Yasser al-Hudeibi [stated](#) that the party will announce its official coalition before the start of the fourth legislative session; Hudeibi added that the organization seeks to form a majority bloc in the legislature with at least 300 representatives.

Local Administration Committee Chairman Ahmed al-Sageeni [stated](#) that Abdel 'Al has not acknowledged his request to hold committee sessions during the parliamentary recess.

Representative Gamal Abbas of the Youth and Sports Committee [announced](#) that he had been allocated LE250,000 from the Youth and Sports Ministry to develop youth centers throughout Assiut.

A delegation from the Manufacturing Committee, including its chairman, Ahmed Samir Salah, [visited](#) various automobile factories in 6th of October City.

Representative Ahmed Ismail of the Defense Committee [described](#) the relationship between Egypt and the United Arab Emirates as "special" based on the joint cooperation between both countries and the leading efforts they take in regional affairs.

Youth and Sports Committee Chairman Farag Omar [noted](#) the "necessity" of Egyptians returning to soccer stadiums to watch matches.

The House [hosted](#) the Agriculture Committee of the Pan-African Parliament beginning August 7 for the body's internal sessions.

Representative Mustafa Bakri of the Constitutional Affairs Committee **suggested** criminalizing the spread of rumors, similarly to the “false news” doctrine in the media law.

Representative Gamal Koush of the Suggestions and Complaints Committee **announced** that four youth centers that and a new school will open in Qalyubia.

Representative Samir al-Bateekhi of the Youth and Sports Committee **described** the National Football Association as corrupt, based on its recent financial decisions.

Representative Hala Mustakeli of the Health Committee **stated** that all government sectors must aim to implement Sisi’s initiative to combat overpopulation, beginning with promoting family planning and women’s reproductive health in Upper Egypt and other rural areas.

Representative Hisham Omara of the Economic Affairs Committee **stated** that the first quarterly update from the cabinet in regards to the implementation of its agenda will come at the beginning of the fourth legislative session.

Deputy Speaker of the House al-Sayyid al-Sharif **stated** that local elections would be held nationwide following the issuance of the Local Administration Law early in the fourth session.

Representative Mageda Nasser of the Education Committee **welcomed** Sisi’s decision to declare 2019 the Year of Education, noting that she hopes this declaration will encourage more individuals to develop the sector nationwide.

FEP Chairman Essam Khalil **called** on Amnesty International to stop interfering in the Egyptian judicial system, following the organization releasing a statement regarding imprisoned photojournalist Mahmoud Abu Zeid, known as Shawkan.

Looking Ahead

- The House remains in recess until early October, when the body will convene for the fourth legislative session.



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EGYPT **PARLIAMENT WATCH**

Egypt Parliament Watch is the most comprehensive project on Egypt’s elected legislature, providing analysis of the body’s performance in fulfilling its constitutionally mandated tasks, the legislation it produces, and the political dynamics at play.