



# EGYPT PARLIAMENT WATCH



## WEEK IN BRIEF AUGUST 26–SEPTEMBER 8, 2018

### Summary

- The House of Representatives will conduct several international delegation visits during the fourth legislative session, according to Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Tariq Radwan. The list of countries includes China, Cyprus, France, Ireland, South Korea, and the United States.
- Parliamentary sources announced that the fourth legislative session is expected to reconvene either October 2 or October 3. Representative Ahmed Helmi al-Sharif outlined the initial schedule for the session, which will include Speaker of the House Ali Abdel 'Al inaugurating the session, announcing vacant positions, and holding meetings to determine parliament's agenda and committee elections.
- The new list of governors was announced by presidential decree on August 30. Representatives welcomed the new governors to their positions and recommended initial policies that ought to be adopted.

### Notable Developments

#### Representatives Prepare for Delegation Visits:

Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Tariq Radwan [stated](#) that several parliamentary delegation trips will occur during the fourth legislative session, including Cyprus, France, Ireland, and the U.S. following the midterm elections. Radwan also said that Abdel 'Al will travel to China and South Korea. Dates were not disclosed for any of these visits, except the [trip](#) to France in October and the Cyprus [visit](#) next week (see Looking Ahead section for more details). Both trips will be led by Abdel 'Al.

## Initial Schedule for Upcoming Parliamentary Session Released:

Representative Ahmed Helmi al-Sharif of the Constitutional Affairs Committee [outlined](#) the initial steps that the House will follow during the beginning of the fourth legislative session. First, Abdel 'Al will officially [open](#) the session per President Abdel-Fattah El Sisi's presidential decree. Next, any vacant seats in the legislature will be [announced](#) that have been caused by the death, expulsion, or resignation of a representative. This announcement will be [followed](#) by a discussion led by prominent parliamentary officials and meetings by party leaders in the House to determine parliament's agenda for the upcoming session and the schedule for committee leadership elections. According to parliamentary sources, the fourth legislative is expected to reconvene on October 2 or October 3.

## Representatives Praise New Governor Appointments:

The new list of governors was announced August 30 by presidential decree. Governors lead individual governorates and respond to local concerns at the direction of the executive branch per the Egyptian Constitution. Representatives, notably [Ahmed Fergani](#) of the Local Administration Committee, praised the appointments and called on the new governors to promote [economic development](#) and [budget efficiency](#) in their new positions. Similarly, Local Administration Committee Chairman Ahmed al-Sageeni [penned](#) a letter to the new governors congratulating them on their appointments. (For more information on the new governors, see the addendum below.)

## Other Developments

### In Legislation:

As the House remains on parliamentary recess, no bills were submitted during the past two weeks.

### In Session:

Representative Samir Rashad Abu Talib of the Suggestions and Complaints Committee [submitted](#) a request to hold a discussion during an upcoming general session on the problem of traffic congestion and the government's response to it. Abu Talib [submitted](#) a separate briefing request to Abdel 'Al to ask Prime Minister Mustafa Madbouli about the water shortage situation in Minya.

Representative Muhammad Zein al-Din of the Transportation Committee [submitted](#) a request to the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation inquiring about governorates' abilities to handle rainwater and potential flooding.

Representative Khaled Khalfallah [received](#) approval from the Ministry of Housing to establish a water station in the village of Naga Hammadi costing 130 million Egyptian pounds.

Representative Shireen Farag of the Foreign Affairs Committee [submitted](#) a memo to Madbouli to abolish the Ministry of Environment for failing to adhere to its duty to provide for the cleanliness of the state. Farag also intends to recommend the establishment of a parliamentary fact-finding committee for the purpose of investigating the ministry's operations.

Representative Hisham Omara of the Economic Affairs Committee [submitted](#) a briefing request to the Ministry of Petroleum regarding the tariff placed on gas cylinders.

Representative Omar Hamroush of the Religious Affairs Committee [submitted](#) a briefing request to Abdel 'Al and Madbouli regarding the water shortage crisis in Beheira. Hamroush attributed the problem to insufficient local systems.

Youth and Sports Committee Chairman Farag Amer [submitted](#) a briefing to Abdel 'Al requesting Madbouli and the Minister of Trade appear before the House to discuss the water crisis in Borg al-Arab.

Representative Fayez Barakat of the Education Committee [submitted](#) a briefing request to Abdel 'Al and Madbouli regarding the government's plan to combat illiteracy. Roughly 25 percent of Egypt's population is illiterate.

### **In News and Statements:**

The House of Representatives [released](#) a statement praising the U.S. Congress for posthumously awarding former president Anwar Sadat the Congressional Gold Medal.

Representative Muhammad al-Husseini [met](#) with Minister of Education Tariq Shawki to discuss different initiatives to develop the education system in Bulaq.

Arab Affairs Committee Chairman Saad al-Gamal [expressed](#) grief over the continued violence in Basra, Iraq. In a committee press statement, Gamal called upon Iraqi government officials and parliamentarians to expedite the government formation process to avoid further violence.

Representative Ahmed Badawi of the Communications Committee [asserted](#) that the number of daily claims investigated pertaining to internet content has decreased from 120 to 80 since the issuance of the Cybercrimes Law.

Representative Margaret Azer of the Human Rights Committee [announced](#) that the committee will work with the Ministry of Social Solidarity to develop a plan to solve the situation of individuals guilty of crimes pertaining to debt (known as *gharimin*) and provide them with financial opportunities to resolve their debt crises.

Abdel 'Al [met](#) with Abdullah bin Khalef al-Dusri, the secretary-general of Bahrain's parliament, and he affirmed the strong historical relations between the two states.

The Tagammu Party, Conservative Party, and the Egyptian Social Democratic Party all [issued](#) separate statements mourning the death of former Tagammu Party Chairman Hussein Abdel Razek.

The Wafd Party [held](#) a public forum in Giza to discuss the ongoing water crisis in the region.

Deputy Speaker of the House al-Sayyid al-Sharif [hosted](#) Chinese Ambassador to Egypt Song Aiguo; the two officials discussed bilateral relations and economic investments, especially in light of recent development projects in Egypt.

Abdel 'Al met [with](#) Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang to discuss bilateral relations between their countries.

Abdel 'Al and various members of the Foreign Affairs Committee, notably Chairman Tariq Radwan and Representative Karim Darwish, [traveled](#) to Cyprus beginning September 9 as part of a trip to improve bilateral relations between the two countries.

## **Looking Ahead**

- Prominent officials within the Coalition in Support of Egypt, including its chairman, Muhammad al-Suweidi, will [hold](#) a series of meetings with Health Minister Hala Zayad in the near future to discuss the development of hospitals located in rural areas.
- The Nation's Future Party will [sponsor](#) medical clinics located in various villages throughout Fayoum beginning September 15.

## Addendum: New Governors

For further context on the new governors appointed by executive regulation, the following information provides legal information pertaining to the appointments as well as a list of the new officials.

### Recent Developments

The new list of 27 governors was announced on August 30 after months of speculation and rumors. Of the 27 available positions, five governors retained their positions and one individual was named governor of a different region.

The information in parentheses denotes the individual's professional background.

- **Returning governors (retaining the same position)**
  - South Sinai: Khaled Fouda (Military)
  - Qena: Abdel Hamid al-Haggan (Military)
  - Red Sea: Ahmed Abdullah (Military)
  - Port Said: Adel al-Ghadban (Military)
  - New Valley: Muhammad al-Zamlout (Military)
- **New governors**
  - North Sinai: Muhammad Abdel Fadl (Undisclosed)
  - Beni Suef: Hani Abdel Gaber (Lawyer)
  - Luxor: Mustafa Khaled (Lawyer)
  - Daqhalia: Kamal Gad (Doctor)
  - Qalyubia: Alaa Abdel Halim Marzouq (Doctor)
  - Alexandria: Abdel Aziz Qonswa (Doctor)
  - Aswan: Ahmed Ibrahim (Military)
  - Suez: Abdel Meged Saqr (Military)
  - Ismailia: Hamdi Othman (Military)
  - Assiut: Gamal Nour al-Din Zaki (Military)
  - Giza: Ahmed Rashad Atifi (Military)
  - Cairo: Khaled Abdel 'Al (Military)
  - Fayoum: Essam Saad (Military)
  - Minya: Qassem Muhammad Qassem (Military)
  - Mersa Matruh: Megdi Abbas (Military)
  - Monofeya: Said Muhammad Abbas (Military)
  - Gharbia: Hesham al-Said Muhammad al-Sayyid (Undisclosed)
  - Beheira: Hesham Abdel Ghani (Military)
  - Sohag: Ahmed al-Ansari (Doctor)
  - Damietta: Minal Awad Mikhail (Female, Copt, doctor)

- Kafr al-Sheikh: Ismail Abdel Hamid Taha (Military; former governor of Damietta before these appointments)
- Sharqia: Mamdouh Mustafa al-Sayyid Ahmed Gharab (Doctor)
- **Officials' background**
  - Of the **22** newly appointed governors, **12** of them have military backgrounds.
  - All **5** of the returning officials possess military backgrounds as well, bringing the cumulative number of military-associated governors to **17**.
  - Minal Awad Mikhail, the newly appointed governor of Damietta, is the **first female Coptic** individual appointed as governor.
  - Of the **10** nonmilitary associated governors, **6** are doctors, **2** are judges, and **2** are undisclosed professionals.

## Background

Per Article 179 of the Egyptian Constitution, the appointment process for governors is determined by applicable legislation. Under Law No. 43 of 1979, specifically Article 25, the president of the republic possesses the authority to appoint governors. Governors are delegated authority by their superiors, officials within the national government, according to Article 148 of the Egyptian Constitution, and they are responsible for controlling local affairs and other tasks as directed by the national government. Sisi has increasingly appointed governors with military backgrounds that will serve at the regime's behest, a trend reminiscent of former president Hosni Mubarak. This most recent turnover occurred following Sisi's cabinet shake-up after being reinaugurated as president in June 2018.



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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.