



EGYPT PARLIAMENT WATCH



WEEK IN BRIEF JULY 17–30, 2019

Summary

- House of Representatives Spokesman Salah Hassiballah held a press conference to discuss the fourth legislative session. He spoke about notable legislation approved during the past legislative session, parliamentary diplomatic efforts, and forecasted legislative endeavors in the upcoming session that begins in October.
- Several representatives condemned Amnesty International following comments it made criticizing the new NGO Law. They dismissed the comments as ignorant and not reflective of the current situation of civil society groups in Egypt.
- After the Wafd Party published an article critical of Representative Karim Salem's efforts in the fourth legislative session, Salem submitted a request to Speaker of the House Ali Abdel 'Al to refer Wafd Party Chairman Bahaa Abu Shoqa to the Ethics Committee in light of the allegedly slanderous article.

Notable Developments

Parliamentary Spokesman Recaps Legislative Session:

Parliamentary Spokesman Salah Hassiballah conducted a press conference on July 24 to review the achievements of the House of Representatives during the fourth legislative session. Hassiballah spoke broadly about some topics, such as the importance of economic reform [measures](#), the need to conduct international delegation visits to [promote](#) diplomatic relations, and the [relationship](#) between the House and executive institutions. Looking ahead to the next legislative session set to begin in October, Hassiballah [emphasized](#) improving parliamentary participation during future plenary

sessions, and he [stated](#) that the House will debate several draft laws including a bill pertaining to a Senate, a new Parliamentary Elections Law, and a Local Council Law.

Representatives Dismiss Comments about New NGO Law¹:

Several representatives [condemned](#) Amnesty International for the organization's critical [comments](#) about the recently approved NGO Law. Representative Muhammad al-Ghoul of the Human Rights Committee stated that the organization failed to understand the regulations around funding outlined in the law, while Free Egyptians Party Chairman Essam Khalil issued similar remarks about Amnesty not understanding the state of civil society groups in Egypt.

Representative Karim Salem Accuses Wafd Party of Slander:

Representative Representative Karim Salem of the Education Committee [submitted](#) a request to Speaker of the House Abdel 'Al to refer Bahaa Abu Shoqa to the Ethics Committee in light of an [article](#) published in al-Wafd newspaper about Salem, accusing him of misrepresenting his constituents and failing to appropriately perform his position as a representative.

Other Developments

In Legislation:

As the House is on summer break, no legislation was discussed or introduced during the past two weeks.

In Session:

According to a report from Youm7, the Human Rights Committee [conducted](#) four visits to detention centers during the fourth legislative session, including to Tora Prison in October 2018, various prison facilities in Beni Suef in October 2018, al-Qanater Prison in December 2018, and various security facilities in Qalyubia in April 2019.

Members of the Media Committee [conducted](#) a delegation visit to Fayoum to inspect significant cultural and tourist locations.

In News and Statements:

Abdel 'Al traveled to Rwanda on July 25 where he [met](#) with Rwanda's Senate President Makuza Bernard. The two officials discussed Egypt's chairmanship in the African Union, economic development opportunities, tourism, and future collaboration to improve bilateral relations. As part of his visit to Rwanda, Abdel 'Al also [met](#) with Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies Mukabalisa Donatille, where he spoke about the significance of political cooperation with other African countries. The two officials spoke about economic cooperation in the context of river countries, regional anti-corruption efforts, and parliamentary relations.

Abdel 'Al visited Kenya on July 22, where he [met](#) with Speaker of the Kenyan Senate Ken Lusaka. The two officials discussed political and economic cooperation, especially given their proximity as African countries.

The House [issued](#) a statement expressing its condolences to Tunisia for the death of President Beji Caid Essebsi.

¹For more information about the 2019 NGO Law, please consult TIMEP's [Draft NGO Law Brief](#).

Deputy Speaker of the House Soleiman Wahdan and Defense Committee Chairman Kamal Amer [hosted](#) a parliamentary delegation from Namibia on July 22 to discuss parliamentary and economic cooperation.

Abdel 'Al [hosted](#) Ugandan Speaker of Parliament Rebecca Kadaga on July 18. The two officials discussed investment opportunities, economic development projects, and political cooperation between their respective countries.

Representative Abdel Rahim Ali of the Arab Affairs Committee [praised](#) the meeting between President Abdel-Fattah El Sisi and Sudanese Transitional Military Council Deputy Chairman Muhammad Hamdan Dagaloas an opportunity to further develop strategic cooperation between their respective countries.

Representative Samir al-Bateekhi of the Manufacturing Committee [described](#) the ongoing drinking water situation in Alexandria as one of the most pressing issues that needs to be addressed.

Human Rights Committee Chairman Alaa Abed [praised](#) the National Youth Conference beginning this week in the New Administrative Capital as an opportunity for youth to promote its interests in the confines of the new capital.

Wafd Party President Bahaa Abu Shoqa [removed](#) party high council member Alaa al-Wishahi from the organization based on slanderous comments that he posted on social media about the party and its members.

Looking Ahead

- The House is expected to convene for the fifth legislative session in early October.



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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.