



Egyptian Initiative
for Personal Rights

The Weeks of Killing

State Violence,
Communal fighting,
& Sectarian Attacks in
the Summer of 2013.

———— June 2014 ————

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Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights

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Numerous EIPR researchers contributed to this report, but we especially wish to acknowledge those who put themselves at risk to observe events personally, constantly striving to maintain their neutrality amid bloody conflict. We also wish to thank those who gave statements for this report, whether participants in the events, observers or journalists.

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Executive summary

This report covers the period from 30 June to 17 August 2013, which saw the removal of President Mohamed Morsi from office and subsequent violent clashes. The report affirms the state's responsibility for human rights violations in this period—both through its direct participation in abuses and its failure to protect citizens' lives and property in attacks on them by non-state actors—as well as identifying the responsibility of partisan and political groups that were directly involved in violence against citizens' homes and property, or deployed hate speech and incitement to discrimination in their media outlets, or at best proved unable to contain this rhetoric.

The report is divided into four main sections, as well as an introduction, concluding comment, recommendations, and an appendix detailing Egypt's international obligations.

Part one of the report looks at four incidents of unprecedented civil violence (clashes between non-official individuals and/or civilian groups) that took place from 30 June to 5 July, leaving at least 53 people dead and hundreds injured. In these events, the absence of the state was one of the primary factors for escalation. Part one documents the clashes that took place in Muqattam at the Muslim Brotherhood Guidance Bureau headquarters on 30 June, which lasted for more than 16 hours and ended with the death of seven people and the injury of 31 at least. It then examines events in the Bayn al-Sarayat area on 2 July, where clashes persisted for 18 hours, ultimately resulting in 25 deaths and more injuries. This is followed by clashes at Sidi Gaber on 5 July; lasting nine hours, they took the lives of 16 people. Finally, this part reviews the clashes in Manyal on 5 July, which lasted for nearly ten hours, leaving at least four dead (in addition to one person wounded in the fighting who died 41 days later) and no less than 103 injured.

Part two documents six incidents that marked the beginning of large-scale extrajudicial killing by the state after 30 June; civil clashes and social strife also continued parallel with state violence. This section discusses the dispersal of the sit-in in front of the Republican Guard Club on 8 July, during which 61 civilians were killed and more than 300 injured, while two policemen and one army officer were killed and several security personnel injured. It then moves on to the

events in Mansoura on 19 July, which ended with the death of four women, followed by the clashes at al-Qaid Ibrahim, which lasted throughout the day of 26 July and ended with the death of 12 and the injury of more than 175. Finally, it looks at events at the war memorial and Nasr Road on 27 July, which left at least 91 people dead.

Part three of the report examines in detail the dispersal of the sit-ins at Raba'a al-Adawiya and al-Nahda on 14 August. A special section was devoted to these events since they were the most lethal incidents of the period and saw the greatest use of excessive force and the largest number of violations. Several police personnel and civilians were also killed in subsequent, related violence in various places in the capital and other governorates. Although there is no official count on the number of casualties from the dispersal of the Rabia sit-in—where clashes lasted for at least 11 hours—the death toll ranges from 499 (according to the Forensic Medicine Authority) and 932 (according to data from the Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights). The latter number appears to be more accurate and is close to the estimate of Prime Minister al-Beblawi, who referred in media statements to approximately 1,000 casualties. In view of its smaller size, both in terms of surface area covered and number of participants, the dispersal of the Nahda sit-in took less than two hours, leaving 87 people dead and at least 147 injured.

Part four of the report discusses the unprecedented sectarian violence seen in Egypt from 30 June to 17 August. It began as leaders of the Anti-Coup Pro-Legitimacy National Alliance supporting the ousted president escalated the rhetoric of incitement against the Church and Coptic spiritual leaders after the armed forces moved to depose Morsi on 3 July. In these few short weeks, 43 churches came under attack. Of these, 27 of were looted and burned almost or entirely to the ground, while 13 churches were partially looted and their doors and windows vandalized or destroyed; shots were fired at three churches. The attacks also struck seven schools and six Christian associations, including two medical centers and an orphanage. In addition, seven church service buildings were torched, and the homes of ten Christian clerics were attacked. In the six weeks following Morsi's removal up to the morning of the dispersal of the Raba'a sit-in, 9 Coptic citizens were killed in various governorates: four in Luxor, two in North Sinai, and one person died in Minya, Sohag, and Cairo. All of these assaults on citizens' lives and property and religious facilities took place in the near complete absence of security forces, firefighters and civil defense, or army forces.

The report makes several recommendations, among them:

1. Regarding “the national independent fact-finding commission investigating the events of the 30 June 2013 revolution and its aftermath”:

- Empower the commission to subpoena all state officials and require them to appear to give a statement in cases examined by the commission. Grant the commission the right to require both government and private bodies to submit all information, statements, documentation, and evidence pertinent to its assigned tasks.
- Give the commission the power of summons, search, and seizure while ensuring judicial oversight.
- Establish instruments to monitor and implement the commission’s recommendations after the completion of its work and the submission of its reports, including an instrument to require the judicial authorities to pursue the commission’s recommendations regarding possible legal violations.
- Institute and enforce a clear law for the protection of witnesses, members of the commission, and its evidence.
- Release the commission’s final report to the public.

2. Publish the reports of previous fact-finding commissions.

3. Undertake a broad, independent judicial investigation into violence from the 25 January revolution to the period covered by the current fact-finding commission (showing due regard for the recommendations above).

4. Form an independent committee of security and legal experts and civil society representatives, including political parties, to propose policies, systems, and technical changes in the operation of the police; these proposals should be submitted to the next parliament to be incorporated in a law. The committee’s work should include:

- Amend laws regulating the use of force and firearms by police to bring them into compliance with the international minimum standards and best practices.
- Amend the police law and ministerial regulations for the armament of the various branches and units of the police to permit parliamentary oversight of weapons purchases and allocations.

- Establish an oversight mechanism independent of the executive to review cases of death or serious injury at the hands of police, whether in detention facilities subordinate to the Interior Ministry or in public places (such as checkpoints, streets and roads, and any other area not directly under the control of the police), with the aim of promoting accountability and ending unlawful police violence and the excessive use of force and ammunition.

5. Repeal Law 107/2013 issued by decree of interim President Adli Mansour on 24 November 2013, known as the protest law. The law so circumscribes the definition of peaceful assembly and demonstration that it is practically impossible to organize any form of peaceful protest. It also establishes arbitrary restrictions on the right to assembly and the expression of opinion, and contravenes minimum international standards and provisions of the Egyptian constitution adopted in 2014.

6. Draft appropriate legal changes to address incitement to violence without infringing on the right to the peaceful expression of opinion.

Introduction

This report presents the results of EIPR's efforts to document the violence in Egypt from 30 June to 17 August 2013, which saw the removal of President Mohamed Morsi and subsequent violent clashes. This was the worst violence seen in the country since Egypt's independence, leaving thousands dead and wounded in just six weeks.

The evidence reviewed in this report indicates that the state bears the major responsibility for the high number of casualties, both through its commission of extrajudicial killings when engaging sit-ins and demonstrations during this period or in its use of disproportionate, lethal force in response to violence by some political groups, and due to its clear failure to protect the lives and property of citizens who faced orchestrated attacks by non-state or partisan groups in the context of unprecedented civil and sectarian violence. A lesser degree of responsibility rests with parties and political groups that were directly involved in violence against citizens' homes and property and deployed—or at the very least failed to curb—hate speech and incitement to discrimination in their media outlets.

Roots of the violence

Egyptians turned out in massive demonstrations across the country demanding early presidential elections on 30 June. The violence began and later escalated when on 3 July the armed forces deposed President Mohamed Morsi and appointed an interim government headed by Judge Adli Mansour, the chief justice of the Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC). The violence reached its peak with the dispersal of sit-ins staged by supporters of the deposed president and the Muslim Brotherhood near the Rabaa al-Adawiya Mosque and in Nahda Square on 14 August, which was followed by days of sectarian violence that targeted Coptic Christians.

The roots of these events reach back prior to 30 June. They are the natural outcome of the failure of successive administrations that governed after the fall of President Hosni Mubarak on 11 February 2011 to institute genuine, far-reaching reforms of the security and justice systems in Egypt and the inability to end practices of religious and gender discrimination, which marred

the performance of state agencies for decades of authoritarian rule. Indeed, all post-revolutionary administrations, despite their fundamental differences, relied in some form or another on the same authoritarian order of laws and repressive, discriminatory practices, using them to further their narrow partisan or political interests. Ultimately, these failures came together last summer to an eruption of various, intersecting kinds of violence that led to widespread violations of fundamental human rights.

The rights violated included a broad class of constitutional rights, first and foremost the right to life, the right to peaceful assembly, religious liberties, and the right to personal security and bodily safety. These rights were violated by a broad spectrum of both official and unofficial actors bearing various degrees of responsibility for the violence depending on their designated role under the constitution, law, and international human rights conventions ratified by Egypt.

Three types of violence, three main chronological stages

The violations were varied and cannot all be classified under one rubric. There were three major kinds of violations in the period under review:

1. Communal violence, or violence between non-state, civil groups, whether armed members of certain political currents, other civilians referred to as “thugs”, or unorganized individuals. Despite the modest level of weaponry involved in these clashes, dozens were killed, hundreds injured, and many people sustained property losses.

2. Organized state violence carried out by the security or military apparatus while dispersing demonstrators, evacuating people staging sit-ins, or breaking up violent civilian clashes. This type of violence is indisputably responsible for the overwhelming majority of victims in these bloody weeks. These weeks were characterized by the deployment of increasingly excessive force by the security forces, especially police, starting with the killing of several Morsi supporters in front of the Republican Guard Club in Nasr City on 8 July 2013, followed by the incident at the war memorial and Nasr Road on 27 July, in which dozens were killed, and ending with the dispersal of the Rabaa al-Adawiya and Nahda sit-ins in Cairo on 14 August. The latter was the single most lethal incident, far surpassing all others, with some 1,000 people killed and hundreds injured in one day. This report concludes that Interior Ministry forces, in particular the Central Security Forces (CSF), used disproportionate, at times indiscriminate, lethal force, killing hundreds of

people in these six weeks. The primary failing by police is the same failing seen in numerous cases of public disturbance in Egypt over the past two years: the failure to use force responsibly and the failure to limit lethal force to cases of the utmost necessity.

3. Sectarian violence, or indiscriminate violence against particular religious groups on the basis of their religious identity. In these cases, the targeted victims are seen to bear responsibility for certain political stances (real or imagined) taken by sectarian or religious leaders. Egyptian Copts, their churches and property were attacked in this period by various non-state actors, among them supporters of deposed President Morsi, leading to the death of 15 people and dozens more injured. The assaults came against the backdrop of hate speech and incitement against Copts and other religious minorities from political and religious leaders, which reached an unprecedented pitch after Morsi's ouster.

These three types of violence overlapped in various incidents discussed in this report, making it difficult at time to draw clear, accurate distinctions. As such, the report adopts a more practical categorization, tracking violence through three phases, in which one of the three types of violence was dominant. The report is divided into four parts. The first part covers events from 30 June to 5 July 2013, in which civilian violence was dominant. Part two looks at the period from 8 July to 14 August, during which civilian violence continued while state violence escalated, while part three covers the dispersal of the two sit-ins on 14 August where state violence reached unprecedented heights. Part four covers sectarian violence from 30 June to 17 August.

Dividing the report into these periods exposes the three major types of violence and the attendant human rights violations, which continue to this day. These periods well illustrate the pattern of violence that followed, a comprehensive documentation of which is beyond the capacity of any single advocacy or research group. Thus, this report does not address other incidents in which hundreds of people were killed and injured—in Ramsis and the Fath Mosque, al-Nozha and Alf Maskan (Cairo), al-Omraniya and Kerdasa (Giza), Kom al-Dikka in Alexandria, Suez, and several other places around the country. At the time, EIPR researchers were unable to directly observe and document these events.

Methodology

The report relies on investigations of EIPR researchers who observed the violence or interviewed witnesses, journalists, field doctors and medics, and doctors and medical workers in the

hospitals around the sites of violence. The report also uses press statements made by political and security officials and official statements issued by the Interior Ministry and the Ministry of Health. Researchers also closely reviewed hundreds of video clips available on news sites or filmed on camera phones by witnesses or journalists.

Collecting testimonies was an extremely arduous process for reasons no doubt clear to the reader, primarily the fragile security situation in many contexts, which impeded direct observation, or the sharp political polarization, which led some people to refuse to speak with EIPR researchers due to competing political loyalties.

This report does not offer a detailed gender analysis of abuses. A separate detailed gender analysis was undertaken by EIPR researchers in coordination with Nazra for Feminist Studies; the findings are published in the report, “Polarization and Social Violence: More Limits on Women in the Public Sphere.”¹

The EIPR hopes that the establishment of a fact-finding commission to investigate the events of this period will be up to the task of assessing these difficult weeks, whose greatest victim was truth. In particular, the national independent fact-finding commission examining the events of 30 June and its aftermath,² created on 21 December 2013, is engaging in a broad investigation, enjoying official prerogatives, unlike local rights organizations, which only collected testimonies and material available to them. The EIPR prepared this report in part with the intent of submitting it to the commission, in the hope that it will help not only to expose the truth, but in the prosecution of those responsible for the death and injury of thousands of Egyptians. We hope that as we approach the end of the roadmap announced on 3 July 2013, the distance from these bloody events will give rise to a calmer climate that will permit serious, responsible engagement with the findings of this report.

Background to the events

Popular opposition to President Mohamed Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) government grew sharper with the issuance of the supplementary constitutional declaration on 22 November 2012, less than five months after Morsi assumed office on 1 July. In the wake of this,

1- <http://eipr.org/report/2013/12/16/2109>

2- See the EIPR comment on the formation of the commission, <<http://eipr.org/en/pressrelease/2014/01/22/1938>>.

the National Salvation Front (NSF) was formed, which included numerous figures, movements, and political parties opposed to Brotherhood rule.³

The MB's decision to send its members and supporters to confront demonstrations on 4 December in front of the Ittihadiya Presidential Palace, called by several political forces, sparked Communal violence.⁴ Clashes between presidential supporters and opponents left ten people dead and hundreds injured, in full view of the police, who took no action to intervene and stop the violence.⁵

The political tension continued to build in subsequent months, reaching its peak on 30 June when massive demonstrations were seen all over the country demanding that Morsi call early presidential elections, thus ending weeks of popular mobilization toward the same end. The next day, the general command of the armed forces issued a statement setting a 48-hour deadline for all parties, "the final chance to take up the burden of the historic conditions experienced by the nation, which will neither tolerate nor forgive any force that fails to assume its responsibilities."⁶

On 2 July, President Morsi gave his final speech, failing to respond to popular demands or the armed forces' statement, instead insisting on his legitimacy and speaking about conspiracies hatched against his rule and democracy.⁷

On 3 July, with the expiry of the 48-hour deadline, Gen. Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi,⁸ the minister of defense and war production, gave a speech live on air surrounded by army leaders, as well as Pope Tawadros II, the patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Church; Dr. Ahmed al-Tayyeb, the grand sheikh of al-Azhar; engineer Galal Murra, the secretary-general of the Nour Party; and Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, the coordinator of the NSF and the head of the Dustour Party, amongst others. Morsi and some of his presidential staff were arrested and placed in detention in an undisclosed location.

Sisi announced a new roadmap, suspending the 2012 constitution and declaring the chief justice of the SCC as the interim president until new presidential elections.

3- <http://www.nsfeg.org/%D8%B9%D9%86-%D8%AC%D8%A8%D9%87%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D9%86%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B0/>

4- For the position of Egyptian human rights organizations, see <<http://eipr.org/pressrelease/2012/12/06/1552>

5- For EIPR investigations into the Ittihadiya events, see <<http://eipr.org/pressrelease/2012/12/27/1570>

6- Listen to the statement at <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CTjtSayUeCg>

7- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O0Uqap-cX8Y>

8- He was promoted to the rank of field marshal on 27 January 2014.

Part one:

30 June–5 July an unprecedented spike in Communal violence

The signs of the slide into violence—communal violence, state violence, and sectarian violence—became clear in these six days, which were marked by purely civilian clashes. These clashes involved competing anti- and pro-Morsi demonstrators or demonstrators and the residents of the neighborhoods they passed through (described as either local residents or thugs, depending on the narrator). As revealed by human rights investigations into these events and the monitoring of media coverage, this violence was qualitatively different from previous violence, in terms of the type of clashes, the scope of the violence, and the weapons used in street battles. The largely civilian participants used a wide variety of weapons, including bladed weapons, Molotov cocktails and other types of petrol bombs, primitive, locally made firearms (maqarit), and automatic weapons. In every single incident discussed below, live ammunition was used in the heart of residential neighborhoods and in broad daylight, leading to numerous victims in these events.

The EIPR was able to document 53 deaths in four separate incidents from 30 June to 5 July, as well as hundreds of injuries. Other clashes occurred elsewhere between pro- and anti-Morsi demonstrators or outside the offices of the MB or the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) which EIPR researchers were unable to investigate, including clashes in Assyout on 30 June (at least four dead), clashes in Abd al-Meneim Riad Square in Cairo on 5 July (more than ten dead), and other incidents in Ismailiya and Damanhour.⁹

In the incidents observed by the EIPR, clashes often erupted for reasons unrelated to political or partisan loyalties. Rather, a dispute would arise between people staging sit-ins in various

⁹- This brings the number of civilian casualties in these six days to more than 65. Wikithawra, which has documented casualties from the beginning of the revolution, estimates that 125 people were killed from 22 June to 6 July.

areas and some local residents when the sit-in encroached on the neighborhood or there was a disagreement over parking fees, for example. The subsequent argument would bring in political differences and then devolve into a full-fledged physical clash in which several people were killed. The common feature of the cases reviewed in this part is the state's inability—or refusal, according to many testimonies—to intervene to stop the clashes, prevent escalation (some lasted for a full day), or prevent more deaths. In all cases, the state is responsible for attempting to defuse civil tensions, protect lives, and stop Communal violence. This responsibility is pertinent to all incidents from this date, in which both state personnel and civilians were killed.

30 June: Muqattam

At approximately 4 pm on 30 June, a small march of no more than 30 people, many of them teenagers, headed to al-Nafoura Square in Muqattam. The participants originally intended to go to Tahrir Square, but decided to stay in Muqattam. They later went to the MB Guidance Bureau on Street 10. There the youths began cursing people in the building's garden, who responded by throwing stones at them. Some of the demonstrators broke the camera affixed to wall surrounding the building, after which both sides threw stones at one another. The people in the MB building then threw homemade mortar bombs—balls of cement holding nails and bits of glass that scatter in all directions upon contact with a hard surface—and Molotovs, followed by heavy shotgun fire from inside the building. The clashes lasted until the following morning, killing seven and injuring at least 31.

Most eyewitnesses who spoke to the EIPR said that some youths threw bricks and Molotovs while taking cover behind the building's outside wall, making it difficult for the armed people in the building's windows to target them.

According to Mustafa Bahgat:



The events began with a small demonstration in al-Nafoura Square of 20–30 people, all of them young people aged 12–20, with two or three older people. The demonstration headed from al-Nafoura Square to the Guidance Bureau, came back, and then went there again. The second time, the young demonstrators threw stones at the building, and the people in the building responded by throwing stones as well.

Bahgat saw three people in the building at that moment, one of them on the roof and two in the windows.

Most of the demonstrators stood about 50 meters from the building observing events, although some of them were killed and injured. The people in the building were masked and took cover behind sandbags, shooting at the demonstrators with semi-automatic weapons and pistols, using both live ammunition and birdshot. Eyewitnesses saw sandbags in the upper floor windows (starting on the second floor); from time to time the barrel of an automatic weapon would poke out from behind them to fire at demonstrators.

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“Bricks, mortar bombs, and Molotovs started to be thrown from the building,” Bahgat said, “then at sunset some people started firing shotguns, then live ammunition at about 9 or 10.”

F.M. said,

“

“The kids demonstrating broke the camera hung on the outer wall of the building then the people in the building began heavy shotgun fire, about 15 rounds one after the other.”

Mahmoud Zaghoul reached the area at about 8 pm to find two injured people, carried by demonstrators. The demonstrators had formed a semi-circle about 50 meters from the building and a few of them were standing behind the building wall. Zaghoul said,

“

“Sporadic shots were fired from the building. The sound came in bursts of three shots, like a semi-automatic. Sometimes you’d hear the sound of one bullet and sometimes birdshot.”

Demonstrators were first injured with shotgun fire and later with live ammunition, mostly in the chest and head.

During the clashes, some masked men arrived with automatic weapons and fired at the building for several minutes. They quickly left after demonstrators accosted them, thinking they were fleeing the building. The masked men threw a sound grenade to keep back the demonstrators from one of their colleagues, who managed to escape with them. Zaghoul saw the masked men—one of them was quite big, as shown in some video footage—when they arrived. One was directly in front of the MB building (from the direction of the Rakhawai Hospital) while two men hid behind him on the first corner after the building on Street 10. Behind them another

two men took cover behind the trees in the garden facing the building. They fired their weapons for several minutes then disappeared.

Ahmed Saleh said:

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From time to time some masked guys would come carrying weapons. They looked like automatic weapons, but I couldn't identify them. These groups would advance and fire at the armed people in the building then leave quickly. Once time, the demonstrators grabbed one of them and started beating him, thinking that he had escaped from inside the Guidance Bureau. Then we heard an explosion or gunfire from a closed place (a building entrance). The source and cause was not clear.

Later in the night, the demonstrators brought in small butane canisters, of the type for home use, opened all the valves, and tossed them at the gate of the building. They then threw Molotovs at them. They managed to blow up four of the canisters, but were unable to blow up the gate or bring it down. Some eyewitnesses said that some demonstrators used shotguns and firearms in the early hours of the next morning.

The police were present in the area during the clashes. Four CSF special operations transport trucks, manned by soldiers and at least two officers, were deployed in Nafoura Square from the outset of the incident; there were also officers tasked with guarding the building in the kiosk across from it. After midnight, three Interior Ministry armored vehicles passed through the clashes, but none intervened. A helicopter hovered overhead for several minutes before leaving. Several eyewitnesses said that they had spoken with the officers in Nafoura Square—located less than one kilometer from the Guidance Bureau—and at the building asking them to intervene, but they all refused, citing various excuses, although the clashes lasted for more than 16 hours.

Mahmoud Zaghoul saw a police presence in Nafoura Square, near the Guidance Bureau office: four CSF special forces transport trucks manned with soldiers and two officers at the rank of major. Some of the demonstrators spoke with the officers, in Zaghoul's presence, asking them to go to the building, but they responded that they were “waiting for a signal to do so” and were there without the knowledge of the interior minister. A short time later, the officers got in the armored vehicle and began to move. When the demonstrators asked them if they were heading to the Guidance Bureau, they responded in the affirmative, but they then left Muqattam in the armored vehicles.

One eyewitness said:

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Before morning and at various times, at least two gray armored vehicles passed by us, in the area between us and the Guidance Bureau. [The EIPR obtained a photo of one of the armored vehicles.] One military helicopter hovered above us. The demonstrators welcomed the armored vehicles and jumped on top of them, but they drove to Street 9 without doing anything. Also on my way there, I saw a police checkpoint in Nafoura Square, during the clashes.

One eyewitness claimed that there was a police presence in the area and he identified them by name. On his Facebook page, Hadhifa Abu al-Futouh wrote that Muslim Brothers in the building attempted to leave and that he contacted government and army leaders to secure their exit. Finally, MB leaders sent cars.

“

“The escape plan involved throwing tear gas canisters to keep the thugs back so they could get out and get in the cars,” Abu al-Futouh said.

He said that one of those attempting to flee the building fell into demonstrators’ hands, and he claimed that a police officer he knew was giving directions to some demonstrators. He added,

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“The whole time we were watching what was happening around the building. We saw thugs getting Molotovs together and throwing them at the building, we saw snipers shooting at the office, and we saw thugs with automatic weapons doing the same thing.”

From the demonstrators’ side, eyewitnesses said that a microbus arrived early in the morning with two people on top firing at demonstrators with automatic weapons to disperse them before people came out of the Guidance Bureau and fled. The eyewitnesses believe that 10–12 persons surrounded in the building managed to reach the vehicle, but the demonstrators soon engaged them with live ammunition, birdshot, and a hand grenade. The vehicle was thus unable to take everyone in the building and three were left behind. Two of them ran to the foot of the mountain, known as the Muqattam Corniche, with the help of their automatic weapons. One person carrying a pistol fell into the hands of demonstrators. He was dragged and put in an ambulance with some armed demonstrators. The ambulance took them to the al-Mafariq area, where the

armed men forced the ambulance to kick him out. He was again dragged before being turned over to the police, who dragged him again before driving him away.

In addition to video footage posted online, photojournalists were at the scene in the early hours of the clashes. Some stood on minivans, two of which left when the gunfire began and a bullet pierced the windshield of one van. Demonstrators and the other minivan—working with ONTV—then scuffled before that van left as well.

The EIPR obtained autopsy reports indicating that at least seven people died; we also have medical reports for 31 people injured with live ammunition and birdshot from the Muqattam Specialized Hospital. Other injured people were treated at the Rakhawi Mental Hospital across from the Guidance Bureau and the National Bank Hospital.

2 July: Bayn al-Sarayāt

At around 4 pm on 2 July 2013, fights started between Morsi supporters staging a sit-in Nahda Square and residents of the nearby Bayn al-Sarayāt neighborhood. Clashes lasted until about 10 am the next day, when army forces intervened. The clashes left 25 people dead (according to the names of casualties documented by EIPR researchers in field interviews and official statements to the press) and many injured (there are substantial disparities in the numbers given to the press in official statements¹⁰) on both sides. The dead and wounded were admitted to the Agouza Hospital, the Umm al-Masriyin Hospital, Qasr al-Aini, and the Boulaq Hospital.

EIPR researchers were able to obtain a set of videos from a stationary shop in Bayn al-Sarayāt, filmed by four surveillance cameras posted in the shop. The cameras documented events on the evening of 2 July for nearly 40 minutes until they were smashed by unknown persons. The footage shows dozens of people in civilian clothes (pants and shirts or gallabiyas) breaking into the shop. Most were wearing hard hats, some were bearded, and most of them were carrying sticks and sharp implements. Some also carried photos of Mohamed Morsi, and some had firearms. One video shows a person wearing a white gallabiya carrying an automatic weapon. The people searched the shop and smashed most of its contents, and they brought a wounded person in. Another video shows them gathering around a person and brutally beating him with sticks and kicking him. About a half hour later, two people smashed the surveillance cameras as soon as they discovered their existence.

EIPR researchers also obtained testimonies from Bayn al-Sarayāt residents. They agreed that events began because of an argument over the parking price for a motorcycle near the entrance of the sit-in, next to the Cairo University walls and the Orman Gardens. The argument devolved into violent clashes that lasted until the next morning. The demonstrators used bladed weapons (cutters), shotguns, and automatic rifles, while residents used shotguns, bricks, and Molotovs. Security forces only intervened the morning of 3 July, except for one officer with the Boulaq al-Dakroul police station, who unofficially joined local residents in clashing with the protestors. He sustained what appeared to be a serious injury during the clashes.

The owner of the stationary shop that was vandalized related the details of the beginning of clashes:

10- 619 at <<http://www.egynews.net/wps/portal/news?params=240904>>; 358 at <<http://www.albadaiah.com/node/41920>>; 173 at <<http://www.almasryalyoum.com/node/1914391>>.



I was buying things for the shop from outside the area. When I returned, I found a young man firing birdshot toward al-Nahda. I later learned that it was over LE3. One-third of the local youths were working as parking attendants in Nahda. A bearded man came and parked his motorcycle. They asked for LE3, he refused to pay, and a fight broke out. Two of the young men were badly beaten and were taken inside [the sit-in]. Local youths tried to get in to save them and they were roughed up. One of the guys managed to run, and he got his weapon and started shooting birdshot at them, so the fight got worse...

I think the local guys ran inside this building [the building where the stationary shop is located], and the Brothers ran after them. The attack on the building where the shop is located lasted from 5:30 pm to 10 pm. A lot of people attacked the building, like 50 people. The shop camera filmed them before they broke it. Myself and several other people ran up to the fifth floor and locked the iron door behind us that separates the fifth from the seventh floor. We threw bricks down the stairwell because as they were coming up the stairs they were shooting in every direction. They seemed to have a code. Every time someone said “hamza,” the shooting would start. They were shooting and holding up shields in front of them, like the elevator doors, so they could come up the stairs and not be hit by the bullets. They broke down the iron door and came in the apartment we were in. They smashed everything in the apartment. Some people had things stolen from their homes. They hit me with a club on my head. There was a fully veiled woman, the aunt of someone who was with us hiding in the apartment. She and her husband tried to act as go-betweens. One of them told her he would hit her in the face if she didn’t shut up. It ended when an elderly sheikh told them that bloodshed was prohibited, and that as long as they found no weapons with us, they should leave us alone.

Discussing the storming of the English Faculty of Commerce, the death of local resident Karim Agiba, and the injury of another person, the shop owner said:



While we were stuck in the building and when it got a bit dark, I tried to get to the outside wall and see what was happening below. Suddenly birdshot started flying from the direction of the English commerce building. Karim went to have a look—I had

just told him to be careful—when he took a bullet to his heart from the commerce building. Another person, K.A., was also injured when he approached the wall. There was no security at all at the university. They had broken down the commerce door and entered the university earlier, and there was no security in sight.

Several testimonies confirmed that security forces did not appear until the next morning, save one police officer with the Boulaq al-Dakroul station. The stationary shop owner said:

“

Neither the police nor the army came at all. I called the director of security and he told me literally that they had no orders. The people at the Doqqi police station didn't want to come. The deputy investigator who came was from the Boulaq al-Dakroul station. That was a stand-up thing to do. He was shot. There was a student in the shop when it was attacked and he was beaten by the people who attacked us.

EIPR researchers were able to meet one of the wounded local residents, who showed them his injury: an X made on his neck by a cutter and another injury on his right side that was clearly deeper and most likely made by a bladed weapon.

The testimonies and videos obtained by the EIPR were consistent with the taped testimony of one person uploaded to the internet, a copy of which was obtained by the EIPR. He was among the supporters of the deposed president and discussed why the demonstrators had stormed the building:

“

I was at the main gate of Cairo University at about 4:30 pm. We heard gunfire coming from the gate of the sit-in near Bayn al-Sarayat. I called a friend who told me he was in the building across from the door of the commerce building because they were shooting at them from inside...

As soon as we entered the building, we found a person beating someone, we didn't know who, until someone said, "Hey people, he's one of ours," so they let him go. People were really worked up and couldn't tell anyone apart, because so many people were injured. So many people coming out of the building were messed up by birdshot and bricks. I remember one bearded man who was injured on the whole left side of his face and another injured in his right leg. We tried to enter the building and they kept firing at us in the stairwell. We sat there calling on someone to bring a weapon or

something. A while later, some guys came with shotguns and they started exchanging fire with the people upstairs. Then they started occupying each floor. The people with weapons walked in front and we were behind them...

A fully veiled woman came and told us that her son and daughter, Ahmed and Nada, were upstairs on some floor or another. We went up and knocked on the apartment on that floor. A man behind the door answered saying his children, Ahmed and Nada, were on the floor above. There was a man I didn't know dressed like a Bedouin who had an automatic weapon, a 7.62 mm. He saved us that night. He made a path for us. Every time he fired a round, they got afraid. The group with shotguns followed and we, the ones without weapons, were behind them. We searched each floor until we got to a floor with an iron door. We found an unfinished apartment with a police dog inside and a second apartment with the lights on. We knocked but no one answered. That was the norm in all the apartments we knocked on, but the lights were on. We broke down the door and found a huge police dog running at us. One of the brothers shot him with birdshot to injure him. He laid there bleeding, but we were afraid we'd run out of birdshot so we didn't put him down until later, so he wouldn't suffer...All this time, there's gunfire and the brethren are exchanging fire with thugs inside the building. We made up a password for the people coming and going from the building, so we could recognize each other. Anyway, we went to the apartment on the top floor and called out and knocked. The lights were on. We thought we'd just break the door down because we were afraid the thugs were holding the girl and boy inside. As soon as we started to break down the door, a man appeared at the door in a shirt and pants saying, "Why are you breaking in on us. We're inside afraid of you. We don't have anything or anyone with us. Come in and search if you want." We said fine, we'll search it. We entered and found an apartment like a lecture hall. He was a young man. Another young man came out of a room and had a bag filled with 12-gauge birdshot, green and red. He told us he found it on the balcony. They swore up and down that they weren't with anyone and this wasn't their stuff, and in fact, they looked like university students, not thugs. No one touched them. One of the brethren decided to take the birdshot so we could use it...

We went upstairs and found an apartment with a reinforced door. The father of the boy and girl came—his name was Abd al-Rahman, I think—a bearded man. He started knocking on the apartment door. He said this was the building owner’s apartment. He yelled for the man and told him to open up, he would be safe. We stood there for 45 minutes begging him to open up. We told him we just wanted to make sure they were okay and that no thugs were holding them, that they were safe and fine. He would answer us from inside, refusing to open. Of course, when he refused, we began to suspect something—he’s the owner of the building and he knows the old man with us, who’s asking about his children. If you had nothing inside with you, you wouldn’t be afraid to open up. In the end, we decided to break down the door. We broke it down using the elevator door. When we finally opened it, we found they had put the entire sitting room furniture set behind the reinforced door. Of course, that fed our suspicions. We entered and found him, about six young men, the girl and boy we were looking for, three women, and another girl. When we first broke the door down, we stopped the brethren from entering until we knew who was inside. Suddenly, one of them [the people inside] walked by in a t-shirt with blood on it. I couldn’t control myself and I insulted him and went in and started hitting him with a stick—the leg of a chair that had been broken when we entered. The rest of the brethren came in and we searched the whole place. In fact, we found no weapons at all. There was a locked door that we tried to break down. Suddenly, someone opened it from inside, a dark man who looked like a thug, not at all normal. As soon as he came out, the people beat him, asking him why he was hiding. He told them he was afraid of them. One of the brethren hit him on the head with a chain from an iron door he had wrapped around his hand. Some of us told them to calm down, that we should find out who he was first. The owner of the shop said it was his nephew and someone else said it was his relative. He said he worked in the shop. We searched him and found a check in his pocket in his name from CIB for LE700 and an ID saying he worked at Siemens. One of the brethren took the check and his ID, and we decided to take him and question him at the stage at the sit-in, when we saw there were contradictions in their statements. The weird thing was, everyone we searched had an expired university ID. Only the owner of the stationary shop had his ID with him. They sat there crying, saying they

hadn't done anything. We told him that we only entered when we saw blood on his chest. A woman who said she was his wife said that he was looking down the stairwell and was injured, so he came in and locked the door behind them because they were afraid. We untied their hands and told them to wait while we combed the rest of the building. I looked from the balcony and saw that the tallest building next to them was three stories, which led me to believe that they were the ones who had been shooting, and also especially because the gunfire stopped when we reached them. Maybe they threw the weapons down to another floor, but it was dark and we couldn't tell. When we combed the building, we found nothing. We just found an apartment with four girls and three young men in it, who worked at the shops. The brethren who searched the apartment found empty cartons of birdshot, in yellow and blue cartons with a bat printed on them. That's imported, not just anyone can get it. Someone said the birdshot came from the church in Bayn al-Sarayat. People said that was a lie and thought it was information said to promote strife. We stayed in the building from 5 until about 10:30, until Sheikh Hosni came. He was with us, one of the security people in the square. He said he knew these people and that they were residents and that he knew them by name. So we gave them secure passage until they left. The building was surrounded below, but the people who were shooting at us from above had disappeared...

After we returned to the square, there was more gunfire from the window of a university building, a window in the Faculty of Applied Arts, and the building next to it. We were going to enter but then we thought that maybe we were being baited, because we were filmed breaking into government buildings so the corrupt media could exploit it to say that the supporters of legitimacy were smashing and vandalizing things. We then went—there was heavy gunfire at the Tharwat Bridge and from inside Bayn al-Sarayat. I saw people with them in police uniform. They were throwing Molotovs and empty bottles at us from the top of a building. Later, when I was standing at the Tharwat Bridge, a guy there there told me that if we didn't back up, they would shoot us, but we had thought they were with us.



5 July: Sidi Gaber

On Friday, 5 July 2013, several groups supporting deposed President Mohamed Morsi organized demonstrations after the Friday prayer, to set out from various mosques in Alexandria. These resulted in clashes in various places, most importantly, Sidi Gaber, which saw heavy fighting, during which people were thrown from rooftops. The clashes lasted from 5 pm to 2 am; 16 people were killed and 47 people were arrested.

The marches set out from the Qaid Ibrahim Mosque, the Sidi Bishr Mosque, the Yehya Mosque in Zizinia, the Awlad al-Sheikh Mosque in Moharram Bek, and the Ali Ibn Abi Taleb Mosque in Samouha. Demonstrators also assembled in several squares, including al-Hayy Square in Sidi Bishr, al-Saa Square, Victoria Square, al-Rasafa Square, and al-Wardayan Square. The marches in Samouha, al-Qaid Ibrahim, and Moharram Bek headed toward Misr train station, but marches in east Alexandria were interrupted by clashes in Gleem, in which several people were killed. The march then continued toward Misr train station, but the marches in west Alexandria changed course and turned to meet up with the march in east Alexandria, meeting at the northern military zone.

When the marches met each other and turned toward Sidi Gaber, some civilians near the tram station threw stones and bottles at the march in the middle of al-Mushir Street. The demonstrators clashed with people present who supported the army decision. In the meantime, other pro-Morsi marches coming from the sea and Port Said Street clashed with local residents there, in the complete absence of security.

The clashes continued in Sidi Gaber as thousands of pro- and anti-Morsi citizens arrived to support their side. A real battle took shape that involved various types of weapons and participants from numerous neighborhoods, including Bakous, Bahari, Hagar al-Nawatiya, Kormouz, Ghayt al-Enab, Moharram Bek, al-Hadra, Ezbat Hegazi, al-Bakatoshi, Borg al-Arab, and al-Amiriya.

Ahmed Abdullah, an economic researcher and a former member of the Ahrar Movement,¹¹ told the EIPR that he took part in the demonstration from al-Qaid Ibrahim that set out for Misr train station after the afternoon prayer. They were waiting for other pro-Morsi marches to join them with the intention of starting a sit-in in the station square. But the route of the march

11- A youth movement that supported Islamist presidential candidate Hazem Salah Abu Ismail and brought together disparate Islamist currents.

changed, and they headed east at about 4:15 pm. They were joined by marches coming from al-Wardayan and Moharram Bek when they heard the news that army supporters had attacked the eastern march.

When the march Abdullah was in reached the Cleopatra area at 5 pm, some people in the area attacked them with homemade shotguns. At the time, he was standing next to Mahmoud Hassan, who was accused of throwing Mohamed Badr off the roof of a building.

Abdullah said:



I saw everything from the beginning. Our high spirits and our numbers let us advance on the thugs. There were a lot of people among us carrying shotguns, I can't deny it. We advanced to the Mufid Shop, occupying three-quarters of the street. We were gaining ground, but there were guys on the roof of the Khalifa al-Labban building throwing pieces of granite and bottles at us and firing shotguns. Every time we advanced and gained ground, we were forced to retreat again, until many of our people had fallen. A group of young men decided to break down the iron door of the building and go up to these guys on the roof. There was a guy from the Brotherhood with us named Omar...He said he would go first and talk to them nicely. He said they might be local residents and given how we'd been slandered, they'd be right to attack us, especially since we were strangers to the neighborhood and were fighting with locals. He was the first one to go up. I was with a friend who was injured just then by a bottle to the head and I didn't go with them. I stood waiting below the building. We were attacking the people in front of us so they wouldn't get control of the area and so the people upstairs wouldn't have gone for nothing. Anyway, just a few minutes later we heard a scream and a loud thump. About ten minutes later, an attack came from a side street next to Mufid, lots of young men with bladed weapons, homemade shotguns, and other shotguns. They were saying, "You infidel bastards, you throw kids off roofs!" I really didn't understand, no one had fallen in front of us. Then the people who had been on the roof came down. One of them...told me that when they first went up, they found Omar, may he rest in peace, standing there talking to them. One of them cursed his religion and threw him off the building. They went crazy and went for the kids. They brought them down [from the roof] and were beating them, but while they

were coming down, one of them fell into the stairwell. While he was telling me what happened, I met Mahmoud Hassan...He sidled up to me in silence. I asked what was wrong. He said, "Our sins are on the necks of the infidels." ...He was in shock. We kept up the skirmishes and the back-and-forth until I left at about midnight. Police cars were firing tear gas at us.

Ahmed Abd al-Khaleq, 30, a resident of Sidi Gaber, said that he was at the clashes from the beginning:



Every week after the Friday prayer, I sit with my friends in the neighborhood at the Fishawi café on Mushir Street. While we were sitting there at about 4 pm, we heard people running in the street carrying Sisi's picture and saying the Brotherhood are coming, the Brotherhood are coming. The shops started closing up, especially because of what had happened in Sidi Bishr. People who had parked their cars on the street moved them, and the tension in the area grew.

When the Brotherhood demonstration arrived, they entered the street chanting, "Peaceful," but a street kid threw a brick at them, from on top of the station wall, I think. The Brothers mobbed him and beat the tar out of him. Then heavy gunfire came from their direction. They went crazy on people. People started running and the shops were shutting down. The tension was high. I stayed in the café a while and then the fight between the two sides started. Of course, I'm not on either side, but when someone attacks my neighborhood and the boys of the neighborhood, I've got to stand up to that. Anyway, they came armed and prepared for trouble.

I waited until we made them retreat toward Sidi Gaber al-Sheikh and I crossed the street and went down al-Wasaaya [the street next to Mufid], to go home and reassure everyone, since my mobile battery had died. Then I went out again. Hamada being thrown off the roof enraged me and I went out to protect my street. That day I saw weapons I'd never seen in the street before in broad daylight—a 5 mm automatic rifle, a 9 mm Beretta. It was real urban warfare. At about 10 pm, Sidi Gaber was completely dark, there was no light, it was pitch black. The only light was from the fireworks. It was the first time I saw someone throw fireworks at the Brotherhood. I saw their

women gathering stones from the tram tracks and making Molotovs. There were a lot of thugs among them. I know Brotherhood youth and what they look like, but the people with them were clearly from working-class neighborhoods. They were with them either because of sympathy or money, God only knows, I can't say. I stayed in the street until 2 am. Things developed. There were tons of people fighting over the whole area from Abu Qir Street to the northern zone, from the tram up to Cleopatra and all along the market. I saw no police or army intervene except to fire tear gas. After that they withdrew to the train station and stood there watching.

Maged Salah, 37, the owner of a mobile shop in Sidi Gaber and a local resident, was an eyewitness to the clashes. He gave the following testimony to EIPR researchers:



Every Friday I sit for a while at al-Sayyed al-Hareth's High Dam Café. There were people sitting next to me, not from the neighborhood, saying the Brotherhood was having demonstrations today and that if they came to Sidi Gaber they would get [expletive]...A guy came up to them and said he had just come from Gleem. He said, "We really roughed them up and we slowed them down but the bastards aren't finished. They're intent on coming here. Let's show them a good time." That person then called over some kids, aged 15–20, standing near the fountain on Abu Qir Street and he spoke with them. They ran and started gathering up bricks, bottles, and pebbles from the tram tracks and walked toward Mushir Street. A little bit later, the call went out for the afternoon prayer. After the prayer, the Brotherhood demonstrators arrived. They stood for a bit at the top of the street and spoke with local residents, chanting "peaceful" for a while. I stood at the top of Mushir Street at Wahid Restaurant to watch what would happen after the whole demonstration entered the street. Some kids were throwing bricks from on top of the tram station roof and from the same side of the street as Wahid, across from the bakery. Guys from al-Wisaaya fired at them with shotguns. The whole deal started when a group of demonstrators [pro-Morsi] pulled out shotguns and fired. Of course, the local code says you can't come to my neighborhood armed and start shooting at me and people in my hood. Some area residents from al-Wisaaya and the market started to bring weapons and they went at it. I decided to go home because I live at the end of Mushir Street near Sidi Gaber al-Sheikh. I walked

from Ibn Mageh Street, parallel to Mushir, behind the Medina al-Munawwara Hotel. This area was all given over to preparing Molotovs, bottles and petrol, and gathering people for the attack. I got home at 5 and only came out after the party had broken up at 3 am. I went to the al-Sawi Café near the Sidi Gaber Mosque and found it had burned. When I asked, I learned that a group of Brothers had been surrounded with their women at the end of the night and went and hid inside. Some drugged-up kids got out Amm Gomaa, the coffee shop man, and then set fire to it. When the Brothers came out running from the fire, they grabbed and beat them then turned them over to the police. I stood a bit with my neighbors and then went back home. If you saw the street then it was like we were in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Mahmoud Abd al-Aal, a programming engineer and MB supporter, told EIPR that on that day, he took part in one of the pro-Morsi marches that set out from Victoria—Gamal Abd al-Nasser Street, to be exact—after the Friday prayer. His wife and son were participating in another march that left al-Saa Square at the same time. He said:

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When the march reached Gleem, thugs started attacking the first march that I was in. I got worried and went over to them in the second march. The clashes ended with our guys victorious and the thugs retreated. We kept going until we reached Rushdi. I was moving between the two marches with friends and colleagues and to check on my wife and son, who were in the second march. We were supposed to be going to Misr train station, where all seven marches in Alexandria were going to meet. But on the way, between Rushdi and Mustafa Kamel at about 3:30, we were instructed to change course and head for the northern zone in Sidi Gaber, because our problem was with the army and we were going to stage the sit-in there. We waited for the second march and joined it before reaching Sidi Gaber. Our march was peaceful and we avoided clashes and fights as much as we could, especially since we had friends and brothers who had been killed in Sidi Bishr. We reached Sidi Gaber at about 4:15 pm. The locals were standing on both sides of the street. We were chanting, “Peaceful” and “Our people, come down to join us,” and the locals were reassured and let us enter the street. But as soon as we reached halfway down Mushir Street, we found thugs behind us throwing bricks and Molotovs, and firing birdshot. The guys with us stopped them

from reaching the heart of the march...I took my wife and son toward the northern zone because that was where the demonstrators were centered. My wife was in the field hospital because she has medical experience, and I was with those defending our presence in the place. Really, all we had with us was bricks from the tram, and if it weren't for the men who stood with us against the thugs, we would've been eaten alive. There were many injuries from live ammunition. A young man named Ahmed Yehya standing next to me took a bullet to the head...I kept hearing the sound of bullets whistling by beside me. I don't really know where the snipers were—from the street and houses or from inside the military zone—because we were standing with our back to the sea facing the thugs.

The police tried to fire tear gas at us, but the wind from the sea blew it in their direction and they stopped. When darkness fell, two armored vehicles came and stopped in the middle of the clashes and shined their high beams on us. We couldn't see what was in front of us until a group of guys went and attacked them and torched one of the armored vehicles, which reduced the light in our eyes. At around 11 pm, I took my wife and son and left because it was a very difficult situation, and it got to where I was afraid something would happen to them.

Another resident of Sidi Gaber, Mohamed Mahfouz Ibrahim, a 32-year-old public relations official, gave his testimony to the EIPR:



On that day, they threw someone off a roof and set fire to the area. At the end of the day, the café we used to sit at was torched. I was in Mushir Street after the prayer. I usually sat there and met my friends either at the Jimmy Café across from the tram or at the Shukri Café on Abu Qir Street. But that day I was sitting at Jimmy's. At around 3:30, I was getting up to go home for lunch when I heard kids coming screaming from the direction of Mustafa Kamel. They said that the Brothers were coming and they were armed. The air was electric and suddenly the street was full of people, unusual for that time of day on a Friday. The stores shut their doors partially and guys I knew from the area started gathering up stones from the tram tracks, getting ready for any surprise from the Brotherhood. About a quarter hour later, the Brotherhood came, and in the front lines they had people holding bladed weapons. Anytime they saw a

picture of Sisi they would cut it up. One of the homeless boys that sleep at the tram station was holding a picture of Sisi, so when he saw that, he ran and climbed up the awning of the station, grabbing rocks and throwing them at the march. Some of their people ran after him, brought him down and beat him up badly. People intervened to save him before they killed him. Then the march started gathering at the top of Mushir Street. They wanted to enter Sidi Gaber at the northern zone. They sat there chanting, "Peaceful, peaceful," but the kids who were holding homemade shotguns and bladed weapons were cutting up pictures posted on homes and shops and hitting the light posts, as if they were trying to provoke the locals. It's just wrong to enter a neighborhood carrying weapons and then use them on people and take cover behind the locals. So the local toughs let them enter the street and then closed in on them from the sides, throwing pieces of marble, bricks, and stones at them that they had gathered from the tram tracks. The Brotherhood were the ones who fired shotguns first, and then they ran with their women and children toward the northern zone and stayed there. Some police and CSF trucks came and fired tear gas, but then they stopped because the wind blew it back in their face. The fighting between the two sides, Brothers and locals, continued. People who knew guys who liked to fight called them to come because the Brotherhood had an epic amount of weapons. These were people coming to fight, not demonstrate.

The dividing zone between us was at Khalifa's shop and the Sidi Gaber butcher. They would advance a little and reach Mufid, and sometimes we would advance on them and reach the Fayrouz sweet shop. But they held control of the area for a half hour or more. During that time, I saw a group of them get injured from the building with the dye shop. Some of them went up there and that's when it happened. I learned the bastards threw three kids off the roof. At around 5:30, I tried to go home so my family would know I was safe. It was hard to enter al-Wisaaya because at that time people were in a state because of the killing of Hamada Bulbul [Mohamed Badr]. So I decided to walk around, east of Mushir Street. There the local residents were preparing for the battle on the street outside. Every so often, someone would say, "Have you seen so-and-so, people say the Brothers took him hostage." I reached the tram wall from the other direction. It was too hard to come out by the main road, so I climbed the wall

and thought I'd go behind them. That's when I saw women wearing the face veil on the tram tracks making Molotovs. I saw with my own eyes two of them holding pistols and hiding them under the veil. I hid behind the broken tram wall and saw them step out halfway into the street and fire the pistols then take Molotovs and give them to their men before going back to make more. I was actually really scared to cross behind them, afraid they see me and it would be a disaster, so I backtracked. I met a friend from al-Wisaaya and made him walk with me. I had just come out of the market from the direction of Sidi Gaber Mosque when I met some Brotherhood kids. They looked all wrong. They were holding fireworks and shooting them at people. I saw a bunch of kids break into a car and steal it. At around 6, I was home. I had a bite to eat and changed my clothes then went out again. As I was coming back on Port Said Street, I saw something strange. There was a group of guys in their early 20s walking and breaking the streetlights with slingshots. Some guys from our street went and argued with them, and the kids ran toward al-Mushir Street toward the Brotherhood. I saw them again on the tram street at the Sharq neighborhood doing the same thing. In just a bit, the lights went out in the whole area. The only thing lighting the area was the fireworks. Two armored vehicles came at 8 and parked facing the Brothers. They turned their bright lights on their faces, and this gave us a chance to see their size and location and for people to know how to deal with them. But they were able to set fire to one of the armored vehicles two or three hours later. Then the second armored vehicles left and were back in pitch-blackness again. The building above the bank had a balcony where we were being hit with bottles. They were firing birdshot from it every time we tried to get close to the Brotherhood, especially when they had mostly withdrawn at around 1 am. When they ran away and retreated completely at 2, we discovered that the balcony was to an apartment owned by Sobhi Saleh and there were people in it doing their duty. Why didn't we go up there too and throw them down like they threw those kids down, and then say it's because they attacked us?

At around 2:30, things calmed down and there were just a few Brothers who hadn't been able to run and sneak away like the others. They got shut up in the big mosque and another bunch hid in the Sawi Café. Some guys not from the area came and wanted to get them out by force. When they couldn't, they threw some Molotovs at

them in the café. The café went up in flames and the Brothers came out. They were caught and held until the armored vehicles came and took them. Actually, people would have slit their throats if it weren't for the army officer who fired in the air to disperse them. That day I stayed in the streets until 4 am, sitting on the stairs of the Sidi Gaber Culture Palace with a few friends giving grief to one our neighbors who lives above the café that was torched because he helped the Brothers and his father hide some of them in the building. But thank God, things came out okay in the end. None of our friends or acquaintances was hurt, except Hamada, and nearly the whole neighborhood knew him because, God rest his soul, he was always in the street and in his father's paint shop.

5 July: Manyal

Clashes erupted in Manyal near the University Bridge on 5 July at about 7 pm between several local residents and supporters of deposed President Morsi taking part in the Nahda Square sit-in. The clashes continued for nearly ten hours. Firearms were used, leading to the deaths of at least four people (in addition to one person injured in the clashes who died 41 days later), as confirmed by EIPR researchers. At least 103 people were injured according to official Ministry of Health data; they were referred to Umm al-Masriyin Hospital, Agouza General Hospital, Imbaba General Hospital, and the police hospital in Agouza.¹²

EIPR researchers interviewed a group of Manyal residents¹³ who were present at the clashes. One eyewitness said:



The clash began when the people at the sit-in started to expand it and tried to make gates after the prayer at the Salah al-Din Mosque, at the beginning of University Bridge from the Manyal side. Every time someone wanted to pass, they would ask for his ID, who he was, where he was coming from. Of course, we got to where we couldn't stand it. I mean, they're the ones who came to our neighborhood and they're searching us and don't want to let us pass. And the people who were searching and closing the bridge had weapons, saying they were securing their march and the sit-in. So the friction started here with a small fight between them and 20 to 25 local residents.

Referring to the role of the security forces in breaking up the clashes, all the eyewitnesses agreed that the police only came at 3:30 am, when four police trucks arrived from the Old Cairo station, each one carrying an officer and two junior policemen wearing civilian clothing. One eyewitness related:



They had no ammunition and I think they were there unofficially. The officer was even asking the locals if they had weapons and telling them to pull them out and use them. He was joking around and said, "If you guys have ammunition, bring it. Do you know where we can get some?" A guy on a motorcycle took him away and they went

12- Al-Ahram online, 6 Jul. 2013, <<http://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/369482.aspx>>.

13- A group of nine people were interviewed and requested that their names be withheld.

and bought some rounds and came back. At around 5 am, two Hummers came and ran them [the protestors] off the bridge. We entered behind them and threw bricks, bottles, and Molotovs while the Hummer fired in the air...Then they fired automatic rounds and got a response...from the other side. They got the wheel of one of the armored vehicles and it retreated. There was some back and forth on the bridge...until the morning. The police would advance and run with us. They didn't do anything. They would run and advance in one line, shoulder to shoulder. The distance between us wasn't very close, except a few times. Most of the gunfire came from on high. The people we saw from their side were wearing gallabiyas and had beards. Some looked regular in t-shirts and pants. Sometimes they would raise a black flag inscribed with "There is no god but God."

Part two: wide-scale extrajudicial killing by the state and continued civil clashes and tension

The first confrontation between the state and supporters of deposed President Morsi in which the security apparatus engaged in broad-scale killing was outside of the Republican Guard Club on 8 July, when at least 61 civilians were killed along with two members of the security forces.¹⁴ The Communal violence continued as well, typically accompanying demonstrations and marches demanding Morsi's reinstatement. People also continued to be killed in this violence while the state, as noted previously, was unable to perform its role to intervene to protect citizens on both sides. The turning point in the events discussed below, which came after nearly a month of violent confrontations, was the moment that Gen. Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi, the former defense minister, called on the public that supported the roadmap announced by the armed forces on 3 July when Morsi was deposed to grant the state a mandate to fight violence, or "terrorism" as he called it. This appeal played on the public's sense of fear and lack of security that grew out of the unprecedented state of communal violence that had persisted for weeks and was exacerbated by the state's failure, or inability, to perform its legally mandated role.

In effect, the appeal was an attempt to legitimize the security forces' use of excessive, disproportionate force of the type that emerged and became a recurring pattern in the beginning of 2013. January 2013 saw the first instance of the police instantly resorting to live ammunition and immediately escalating to lethal force. This has started right after the appointment of Mohammed Ibrahim as interior minister; the Port Said Prison incident in January 2013 was also the first case where lethal fire was used predominantly in response to a protest, compared to all previous cases where live ammunition was used as a secondary weapon next to teargas and shotgun fire.¹⁵

14- Stories differ about the circumstances surrounding the police lieutenant who was found shot dead in his car; he appeared to be a resident of the area.

15- See: Egypt: Officials Turn Blind Eye to Port Said Police Abuses - Witnesses Describe Port Said Killings by Police, March 2013. <http://eipr.org/en/pressrelease/2013/03/03/1648>, accessed on 16 June 2014.

The demonstrations on the Friday of the Mandate ended with clashes in several areas that left at least 16 people dead in Alexandria. Pro-Morsi demonstrations were even stronger the next day and were met with excessive police force, which left at least 91 citizens and one policeman dead. The violence continued to escalate until the decision to forcibly break up the sit-in in Rabaa al-Adawiya on 14 August.

8 July: Republican Guard incident

At 4 am on Monday, 8 July 2013, the security forces tasked with securing the Republican Guard Club broke up a sit-in by supporters of the deposed president in front of the facility, resulting in the death of 61 people, including at least one child, due to gunshot injuries in the upper body (chest, neck, and head), according to EIPR lawyers' viewing of the bodies that reached the Zeinhom Morgue. More than 300 people were injured, according to a statement given by Dr. Mohamed Sultan, the head of the Egyptian Paramedics, to the Middle East News Agency on the morning of 8 July.¹⁶ Two security personnel were also killed.¹⁷

Pro-Morsi demonstrators first clashed with the forces securing the Republican Guard facility on Friday, 5 July, when the forces fired live ammunition and birdshot at peaceful demonstrators, killing four and injuring others according to reports from rights groups.¹⁸ The demonstrators were protesting the removal of the president from office and since Friday had staged a sit-in in front of the Republican Guard Club until it was dispersed at dawn on Monday.

According to the official account, given in a joint press conference by the Interior Ministry and the military spokesman on 8 July to clarify the circumstances surrounding the events,¹⁹ the director of the media department and the official Interior Ministry spokesman, Maj. Gen. Hani Abd al-Latif, said that the events began when some demonstrators threw stones at the forces securing the facility. Heavy gunfire was then directed at the forces, leaving two policemen dead (a lieutenant and private) and others injured. The official spokesman for the armed forces, Col. Ahmed Mohamed Ali, added that peacefulness was breached when an armed group attacked

16- El-Watan, 8 Jul. 2013, <<https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/220874>>.

17- "Egypt: No Acknowledgment or Justice for Mass Protestor Killings, Set Up a Fact-Finding Committee as a First Step," joint press statement, 10 Dec. 2013, <<http://eipr.org/en/pressrelease/2013/12/10/1895>>.

18- <http://www.hrw.org/news/2013/07/07/egypt-threat-escalating-street-violence>

19- A video of the press conference from Egyptian television can be viewed at <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IaQ-fo7IMqFE>>.

the area around the Republican Guard facility and security forces with live ammunition and birdshot. In addition, a group climbed to the roof of buildings on al-Tayaran Street, facing the facility, and fired ammunition and threw Molotovs and sinks down, which killed one officer and injured 42 security personnel, eight of them critically.

The testimonies of protestors and eyewitnesses diverged, but most claimed that the protestors had not attacked the club and that some of them were praying when they were attacked by security forces.

Mahmoud Galal, a resident of the Obour Buildings next to the Republican Guard Club, spoke to EIPR researchers. According to him, he began to hear heavy gunfire at about 3:45 am. When he looked out from his home, he saw army and police forces led by armored vehicles and security forces firing in the air while the protestors chanted, “God is great, God is great.” The tear gas then began, at which point he left his home and went out to the street. The gunfire continued for about fifteen minutes and seemed, to his ears, to be the sound of automatic gunfire. Galal saw a police officer injured with a bullet in the chest inside an ambulance, as well as many injuries in the ranks of the pro-Morsi protestors, most of them in the chest area. He saw the protestors throwing Molotovs and bricks at security forces, but he saw no gunfire coming from their side. Galal said that the army surrounded the Mustafa Mosque:

“

The Brothers locked themselves up in the mosque and wouldn't come out. They told the army they had women, children, and injured people with them. The army told them to send out the women and children and that they would get an ambulance for the injured. They wouldn't and kept chanting against the army so the army retreated. They wouldn't attack the mosque. The armored vehicles also retreated. I saw a boy shot in the leg who couldn't escape. The army took him and put him in the armored vehicle...It was blue. They didn't take him to the ambulance. Inside the mosque, there were some awful sights. It was a massacre.

Another eyewitness, Abdullah Farhan, also a resident of the Obour Buildings, described what he saw to EIPR researchers:

“

I live in the building that looks out over Ihsan Abd al-Qaddous and Salah Salem. At dawn, I looked out the window and saw the army—armored vehicles—moving toward

the sit-in. My brother and I dressed quickly and thought we'd head out and see what's up. I knew someone at the sit-in and called him to tell him there were armored vehicles heading toward him. By the time we went out, the popular committees at the sit-in had heard the news and had begun banging on metal barriers. It was very clear that the protestors knew nothing and did not attack at all...Half of them were asleep and the other half were praying. The shooting started with security. We were standing at the building. Behind the Obour Buildings is a narrow street that runs parallel to Salah Salem, with garages. There were more than 180 security personnel...Anyone they caught, they would beat the hell out of, any bearded man they caught. Even my neighbor Ibrahim—I don't know him well, but I know his name—he's bearded. I saw him coming upstairs beaten up and bawling. He was with his son, and his face was a mess. They only let him go when they made certain he was a resident...They would beat them with batons and bayonets, stomp on them and then throw them in CSF trucks. There were some really poor souls and they were roughed up badly. Some of the residents here felt really sorry for them and we started lying and saying they were our relatives or worked for us, so they'd let them go.

The EIPR spoke with some of the protestors at the sit-in, among them Dr. Ahmed Shuheib, who had been sitting in front of the Republican Guard Club since Friday, 5 July, with his sisters and brother. He said he was at the sit-in when the move to disperse it began:

“

I woke up to people running and yelling and heard the sound of shotguns. We were hit with so much tear gas. We ran toward Tayaran Street. Until 6 am, not even one ambulance had moved even though there were three of them on Salah Salem toward the airport. People were carrying the injured and running with them toward Rabaa al-Adawiya Square, six or seven km away. People were sick from the gas and the shooting, so some of the injured were left on the street and many of them were arrested, including my brother. When I reached Rabaa, we started setting up a field hospital and gathering hospital supplies. We received 600–700 cases, from light injuries to eye injuries, to serious injuries. The ambulance started taking them to hospitals after 6 am. I saw many gunshot wounds. I saw spent casings and I saw unfired bullets on the ground. The spent casings were either 9 mm or automatic shells.

Numerous websites carried footage showing injuries sustained by the demonstrators,²⁰ the testimony of the injured soldiers,²¹ and the testimony of injured demonstrators. Photos were also published of the incident²² and the dead.²³

Accounts from eyewitnesses who lived near the Republican Guard Club appeared from the outset of the incident. Two eyewitnesses published what they saw. Nadya Hassan said that she saw “tear gas fired from the Brotherhood on the army and also birdshot. After that the army moved faster and there was heavier fighting on both sides...The army was being hit from on top of the building in front of me with bricks, tear gas, and gunfire, but because the building is so high, the army couldn’t reach them. The Brotherhood went behind the buildings and the exchange of gunfire lasted for 10 minutes.”²⁴

The second testimony came from Mirna el-Helbawi, who said that the events began after the dawn prayer, about 4 am. She saw army and police forces and armored vehicles for both forces heading toward the sit-in, then heavy tear gas was fired toward the sit-in. El-Helbawi continued:



At first, the protestors responded with bricks and stones. Suddenly, I heard gunfire, I couldn’t tell if it was birdshot or live ammunition. The police and army retreated very quickly to the Taawon gas station. These shots seemed to come from the protestors. The police and army gathered themselves together again and they began to fire. The Interior Ministry did not try to storm the mosque. The army and its armored vehicles deployed around it because of the protestors who had fled inside. After a while, the army began arresting several Brothers.

El-Helbawi, whose home is on an upper floor, saw people climb to the roof of the Gamaiya Sharaiya Mosque: “Suddenly the army surrounded the mosque and the army came under fire from the rooftop.”²⁵

20- <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHGOP5HFRb4>>.

21- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRKBXZxZkRE&feature=youtube_gdata_player>.

22- Al-Masry al-Youm, 9 Jul. 2013, <<http://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/232810>>.

23- <<https://expatriatemuslim.wordpress.com/2013/07/08/18-republican-guard-massacre/>>.

24- <<https://twitter.com/NadyaHassan/status/354153300985266176/photo/1>>.

25- <https://www.facebook.com/notes/mirna-el-helbawi/%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%AA%D9%89-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AB-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B1%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%85%D9%87%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%89/506266719446598>

In one of the taped clips, a witness who lives next to the Republican Guard facility said that she heard noise at around 3 am on Monday and then soon saw “Interior Ministry armored vehicles coming from Salah Salem, from the direction of the bridge, toward the Republican Guard. They didn’t approach them...These people had been there for three days...They hadn’t done anything to anyone.” She continued: “The people who came and opened fire and fired shoguns was the Interior Ministry and their armored vehicles. They came from the direction of the October Bridge. They weren’t interested in this end [the Republican Guard Club]. There was nothing on this end at all.”²⁶

In his testimony published online, Omar Ahmed said that at around 4 am on Monday, he saw:



...CSF armored vehicles and then a voice on a megaphone giving the protestors 15 minutes to clear the sit-in. The Brotherhood megaphone started calling for martyrdom with the beginning of Ramadan. Then as usual when clearing any sit-in, the CSF began firing tear gas, and in fact, in just a few minutes, they managed to frighten the protestors. But what happened was that we heard the sound of injuries and the dead in the ranks of security. Later it turned out that the Mustafa Mosque was the point from which many weapons or Molotovs were fired at security forces.

Ahmed added, “The only death I saw was on the Brotherhood side. Someone was holding a machine gun and firing indiscriminately in all directions. Five bullets even entered the balcony and broke the glass door. Security shot him with live ammunition.”²⁷

The al-Hussein Hospital, Demerdash Hospital, Manshiyat al-Bakri Hospital, Heliopolis Hospital, and the Health Insurance Hospital in Nasr City admitted protestors injured in front of the Republican Guard Club. The head of the Health Insurance Agency told the EIPR on the afternoon of Monday, 8 July, that the Health Insurance Hospital in Nasr City admitted the most injured people due to its proximity to the site of the incident; the total number came to 270 gunshot injuries, sustained in the chest and neck. The injured were later dispatched to other hospitals because the hospital was not equipped to deal with such numbers. The hospital also admitted

26- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swVgnnCY_LQ&feature=youtu.be>.

27- <<https://www.facebook.com/notes/omar-ahmed/%D8%B4%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%AF-%D8%B9%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AB-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B1%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%85%D9%87%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%8A/10151549390977613>>.

37 bodies that were later moved to the Zeinhom Morgue. EIPR researchers were able to speak with medical staff at the Demerdash Hospital, which admitted some 30 cases; the injuries ranged from gunshot wounds, birdshot wounds, and injuries resulting from beatings with a club. As for the location of injuries, one doctor said that he saw injuries all over the body. He cited injuries to the top of the skull, the forehead, and the shoulder. In one case, a man was shot in the lower knee, which required surgery to amputate part of his leg. The doctor also referred to a person shot with a bullet that entered his right arm and exited on the other side.

EIPR researchers were able to take the testimony of some of the wounded persons. Mohamed al-Sayyed Abd al-Razeq, who was injured with birdshot in the back and a live bullet in his palm, said he was praying when he was injured:

“

We were praying in front of the Red Crescent Tent, facing the Azhar Tunnel with our backs to the Republican Guard. During the prayer, on the second prostration, someone opened fire on us while we were praying. I was hit in the back with birdshot, but thank God I was able to walk. I met someone I know, Mohamed Wadid, who was hit with a bullet and laying on the ground. My friend Mustafa and I started to carry him and were shot with live ammunition. Mustafa ran and I didn't see him again. I don't know what happened to him. I was hit in the hand...with the injury in my back, I couldn't move. A group of guys came with a piece of sheet metal, using it as a shield, and surrounded us. Another group then moved the wounded with motorcycles. They brought us here, to Rabaa, at 4 am. All of this happened in a matter of minutes. While I was down, I saw an armored vehicle run over a woman in her early 20s, she was wearing black. ...I saw an elderly man, about 60, the top part of his head flew off in front of me...The forces that were there were Interior Ministry, wearing black clothes and gas masks, and there were paratroopers and Republican Guard forces. But most of the birdshot and tear gas came from the Interior Ministry, not the army.

Mohamed Ahmed Ali, whose left leg was broken, said he was also injured while praying:

“

We were praying the qiyam prayer and then started the dawn prayer, we were on the second prostration...Suddenly, there was screaming and banging and cries for help. People ran to see what was happening and some continued praying with the imam,

me among them. A little bit later came a torrent of tear gas canisters and birdshot, like 28 January or more...Our face was toward the qibla and our backs to the soldiers. We had barely gotten up when the live ammunition started...I looked at the end of the row and saw a person fall down and we ran to hid. The tear gas was really bad. Nothing works for it, not Coca-Cola or vinegar. The chase lasted a while and I started to see security people...on the rooftops. They were wearing civilian clothes and sitting inside the barbed-wire watching us. The whole sit-in I saw them. They weren't shooting, just watching...I saw a sniper on the top of the Morale Affairs building, a group of four soldiers firing tear gas while the sniper was hiding. He would pop up to bag someone then lay down again...With the utmost professionalism, one bullet would bring someone down. The shooting continued. At one point, I was hiding behind a car and a wall was behind me. The sniper was aiming at me, but it didn't hit me, it just passed by me...I got up and ran and then tripped and my leg broke. The worst thing in all of it wasn't the shooting. We were calling on the residents of the buildings to give us vinegar, but they wouldn't respond. One of them told me no to my face and looked at me gleefully.

Abbas Hussein Abbas, who was injured in the chin, said that he was injured while praying in the Mustafa Mosque:



We were praying the dawn prayer when suddenly tear gas was fired, during the second prostration. We went out to see what was happening, but couldn't see for the gas...The tear gas choked you and made you pass out. At first, it was fired outside and the gas made its way in, but later I think they fired the gas inside because it was very thick. The women and children were screaming. Myself and three others ran to the back of the mosque. We were tearing at the wire so we could escape then we heard gunfire behind us, like it was coming from inside the mosque. We four came out into a place like a stadium. We came out into it and walked for a long time. We didn't know where we were because we're not from Cairo so we don't know anything here. We were met by an army captain, a colonel, and a lieutenant colonel—we knew from their stripes—and they had lots of soldiers with them. They made us lay on our bellies on the ground. They unfolded something like a dagger on their rifles and put them to our backs then

put their boots on our heads and pressed our heads into the asphalt until our faces were a mess. My chin was split open. They took our IDs, ripped them up and threw them aside, and searched us...We thought, that's it, we're dead and they'll kill us. They got orders to turn us over to the police. We walked a long way until we were in front of the Faculty of the Islamic Call and they sat us down on the ground...There were 16 of us. At 9 am, a group of demonstrators approached chanting and asked the forces to turn us over to them. It was men, women, children, and Azhar sheikhs. The number kept growing and they insisted on taking us. They fired tear gas at them—the army had a different gas than the Interior Ministry, the canister was different. Both the army and the Interior were firing from 9 to 11 am, then they turned over 11 of us to the demonstrators and kept five. I don't know where they took them...We were brought to the hospital where they sewed up the wound on my chin. I had a fever too because I had bled a lot and sat in the sun for a long time.

Mumin Ezz al-Din al-Didmoni had his left shoulder dislocated and was shot with four birdshot pellets on the left side of his head. He also said he was praying when the clashes started:

“

On the second prostration...we heard thumping and yelling. I thought thugs had attacked and the army was protecting us from them. While I was running for the gates, shotgun fire came from the direction of the army and Interior Ministry forces, along with tear gas. People fell, and we carried them to the Planning Institute. They fired tear gas at us inside the institute. We didn't know if we should pick up the people and take them elsewhere. Then automatic fire started and we ran...We had been staging a sit-in in front of the Republican Guard Club, but the firing pushed us back and the forces occupied that spot with police and army making a cordon around it. We were then opposite the Qader factory, operated by the Arab Manufacturing Agency and the Ministry of Defense. We saw army soldiers on the gate of the factory shooting at us—live ammunition. People started to move back. People hid in the buildings, they didn't want to retreat more than that. Everyone was chanting “God is great” and “We won't leave.” We threw bricks at them...While I was throwing bricks, I saw someone carrying a flag get wounded. He fell and I picked up the flag and stood there waving it. Birdshot was fired at me, but it hit my ear and one side of my head. I lost my balance and passed out,

falling on my shoulder and dislocating it. Some people picked me up and carried me to the Health Insurance Hospital at around 7 am...I asked for a medical report from the hospital, but they refused. They said you're not part of the health insurance system so we can't give you a report. I left the hospital and came here [Rabaa al-Adawiya] at 2 pm. The type of gas they fired at us was different from what we're used to. Vinegar, onion, soda—nothing worked against it. If you inhaled it, you'd fall down on the spot.

Israa Marzouq Hamed, who was at the Mustafa Mosque during the dawn prayer, said that people on rooftops were shooting:



We were praying in the women's section of the mosque. On the last prostration, we heard the brethren banging on the metal barriers. The brethren who were praying got up and went to them and then we heard gunfire. No one finished the prayer, we all got up. The army forces outside the mosque fired in the air at first and then fired very heavy tear gas. A while later, gas was fired inside the wall around the mosque. We had kids with us. I saw four armored vehicles moving, each one with a soldier on top carrying a rifle and shooting. I don't know if it was gas, or whether it was birdshot or live ammunition...There was a child next to me—the tear gas canister landed on his back and he fell. I tried to carry him, but I couldn't because of the effect of the gas. I dragged him on the ground to the field hospital, barely making it. Two minutes after I entered the field hospital, the lights went out. We turned on flashlights and gave people first aid. I saw a man come who had two holes in his leg. I don't know if they were gunshot wounds or what...Tear gas was fired on us in the field hospital and we ran to the Nasr Company. We kept running as planes hovered above us...We were afraid the planes would shoot at us so we hid in a building. We were ten men, four women, and two children who had been separated from their families. Their names were Ahmed Mohamed Mahmoud Hassan and Gehad Salah al-Bahrawi. The army and police were storming the buildings to arrest the people hiding there. The older people told us they were finding us using our mobile phones so we all turned our phones off and took out the battery. Some people told us to come out and we would be safe. We came out of the building and ran. Someone was firing from the rooftops, we didn't know who.

Ikram Abd al-Qawi, who was also in the mosque, said that she was inside, surrounded, the entire day:

“

We were praying the dawn prayer. On the second prostration, we heard explosions, banging, a big to-do. The imam didn't finish the prayer, but I did. We were in the mosque in the women's section, women, young girls, and four children, including an infant. A girl passed out at one point. The tear gas was very heavy inside the mosque, the place was closed, and the children were screaming. The girls were using their clothes to plug the holes where the gas was entering. I went out to see for myself what was happening. The first thing I saw was a young man, shot dead, in front of the mosque. I went outside and found the armed forces surrounding the mosque. They were the ones firing the tear gas at us...There's a wall around the mosque and there were women, children, and elderly people inside...We were surrounded the whole day.

The Armed Forces Medical Complex in Maadi and the Kubri al-Qubba Hospital admitted injured armed forces personnel. One doctor who treated injured military personnel at the medical complex in Maadi told EIPR researchers that he admitted only two cases. The first had been shot in his side, which had cut off his circulation; he was in stable condition. The second sustained a brain injury due to impact with a strong object at close range; he was in critical condition. EIPR researchers learned that there were eight other armed forces personnel in the Kubri al-Qubba Hospital, but they were not able to reach any of the doctors treating them. A total of 61 deaths were documented in the ranks of the protestors.

19 July: Mansoura events

After the Ramadan tarawih prayer on Friday, 19 July, a march of Morsi supporters set out from the Farmers Syndicate heading for the Mansoura Stadium area. When the march passed by Tiraa Street, it was attacked, resulting in the death of four young women marchers.

In a testimony to EIPR researchers, Ahmed al-Toukhi, one of the participants in the march, said that he was on Tiraa Street at about 10:30 pm when a person appeared carrying a large knife. He made a throat-slitting gesture and then a group of “thugs” or local residents appeared carrying various weapons, including sharpened strips of metal, knives, and shotguns. There were light injuries and people fled into the side streets to avoid confrontations, but they were chased by civilians armed with shotguns, broken marble pieces, and bottles. Al-Toukhi added that he saw one of the victims of the attack, Hagga Ferial, saying that she was killed by a stab wound to the head. Another woman was shot in the side, and he and another marcher carried her from the ground at about 11:30 pm. Al-Toukhi said that the police came after the siege on the demonstrators was broken and then army forces later appeared. He said he left the area to go to the hospital for treatment to injuries to his back, sustained as a result of being hit with a piece of marble and a bottle. He said that he saw many injured marchers and that they were treated at the Mansoura International Hospital and the Mansoura General Hospital. He confirmed that four people were killed.

Hamdi Qenawi, an engineer, told the EIPR that he did not take part in the march, but he learned from some people that the march was slated to pass through Samia al-Gamal Street, at the corner of Tiraa Street, to avoid further clashes between the Brotherhood marchers and residents of Tiraa Street. Qenawi said that some of the marchers asked Brotherhood leaders to change course away from the area of Tiraa Street due to the lack of sufficient “deterrent forces”²⁸ on the Brotherhood side and for the sake of the women marchers. The leadership, however, insisted on passing through Tiraa Street.

In a third testimony to the EIPR in Mansoura, Mohamed al-Atar said that before the fast was broken the day of the clashes, a protest was organized at the Farmers Mosque in front of the Mansoura Stadium. He said he took part in a march that set out from Abd al-Salam Aref Street

28- This term is commonly used by pro-Morsi demonstrators and members of the Muslim Brotherhood to refer to demonstrators tasked with securing marches or sit-ins.

for Tira Street after the tarawih prayers, to head to the University Stadium after that. Al-Atar said that many women took part in the march because most of the men were in Cairo to participate in the Rabaa al-Adawiya sit-in and it was difficult for some of the women to travel. Al-Atar said that at 9:30 pm, thugs appeared on both sides of the march and in front of them. They surrounded them, threw Molotovs, and fired birdshot at them. After storming the march, they began using bladed weapons, causing marchers to flee into the side streets. Some shop owners and local residents allowed them to hide with them, but others refused to give them refuge. He said that two buildings in particular allowed the women to enter, but the armed men surrounded them and attempted to storm them. He managed to get his mother and aunt out of the one of the surrounded buildings, when the women were allowed to leave the building at around 1:30 or 2 am; the men were not allowed to leave. Al-Atar said there was a police armored vehicle and two police trucks on the corner of one of the side streets off Tira Street, at around 1:15 am. They stayed where they were for about 30 minutes, in a location that allowed them to watch the individuals who were accosting the demonstration (described as “thugs” by al-Atar). One of the police officers spoke with one of the assailants and then left with two policemen. Al-Atar said he saw two ambulances. One of them moved while the other was parked next to the police armored vehicle. He claimed that the thugs were working for people known to control the areas of Ezbat al-Safih and Ezbat al-Shahhatin.

Wael Ghali, a lawyer with the Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights in Mansoura, said that he and his coworkers saw the march when it passed by their office. It began after the tarawih prayers and set out from the Farmers Club toward Abd al-Salam Aref Street and then to Tira Street. Ghali said that some people sitting at street cafes waved their shoes at the march. Marchers verbally assaulted local residents, describing them, the leaders of the interim administration, and the Tamarrod movement as traitors, sparking arguments and physical scuffles in the Magzar area. Ghali said that the marchers provoked local residents, who then attacked them, but he believed that the situation was exacerbated by an attack by people he called thugs. He said he believed that the thugs who attacked the march were not residents of the Tira Street area and did not belong to the Muslim Brotherhood. The assailants used bladed weapons and shotguns while the police were absent during the events. Ghali learned from medical examiners at the morgue that the deaths resulted from shots fired at close range.

In a press conference held at Rabaa al-Adawiya on the events in Mansoura on 21 July 2013, Hager Magdi, a friend of one of the women killed in the march (Hala Mohamed Shaayshaa) gave her testimony²⁹:



Hala was next to me, but not very close. Before we crossed Tira Street, she came up next to me. The march is fronted by young men, then women, and then men, for protection. After the first section crossed, we were attacked by thugs coming from the north. They had swords, bottles, bricks, and marble pieces. I was injured in the back (probably by a glass bottle)...They were throwing marble and firing birdshot. We ran away from them and formed a cordon of the sisters to prevent any fights with the thugs. They kept it up and fired birdshot and live ammunition. We entered a side street and I saw a person on his back. I thought it was her and the young men stopped me from approaching. Then I saw a friend screaming and covered with blood. She had been hit with birdshot in her arms, legs, back, and side. I tried to carry her inside a building. We found a pharmacist who bandaged her hands and told us not to worry, it was birdshot. A bit later, we saw about six thugs standing in front of us in the building entrance...The one carrying a sword was trying to put it between the bars of the locked door...they cursed us and burned a picture of Dr. Morsi...Forty-five minutes later, they opened the door and told us the thugs were gone and to come out. While we were treating my friend, we heard the news of Hala's death."

29- EIPR researchers transcribed the filmed testimony. For the full testimony, see <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pil-frvsCl1M>>.

26 July: events at al-Qaid Ibrahim

On Friday, 26 July 2013, several demonstrations took place in the Alexandria governorate, one of them organized by supporters of deposed President Morsi, who assembled after the Friday prayer around al-Qaid Ibrahim Mosque. After they had gathered, a march of supporters of former Defense Minister al-Sisi, responding to the appeal to demonstrate for a mandate, passed by. Clashes erupted between the two sides that lasted for the entire day, killing 12 and injuring more than 175. After the clashes, Morsi supporters detained injured opposition demonstrators as hostages in the Qaid Ibrahim Mosque, where they beat and insulted them.

Karim Shaalan, a participant in the demonstrations, gave his testimony to EIPR researchers. He said that at the beginning of the incident, he was standing on the corniche next to the sea in the middle of chanting demonstrators carrying pictures of Morsi. After the prayer, a group came up by the sea carrying pictures of Gen. Sisi. The Morsi supporters assembled in front of them in the Khalidin Park and kept chanting loudly; they greatly outnumbered the Sisi supporters.

When the pro-Sisi group left following skirmishes, Shaalan saw a group of Morsi supporters holding a person while others were trying to attack him. Some claimed he was a policeman. Tear gas was fired after CSF APCs and “thugs” appeared. The thugs threw stones and fired birdshot at the pro-Morsi demonstrators, which caused some demonstrators to flee; others remained at the site of the demonstration.

Ayman Omar Hassan, a 39-year-old engineer and resident of Gianaclis, told EIPR researchers that he went with his friends to the Qaid Ibrahim Mosque at around 6 pm. The mosque was surrounded by people with Muslim Brotherhood supporters inside. A burned-out car was on the side with the Sisi supporters, as well as police and army forces and some civilians, whom he described as “thugs.” They were throwing stones at Morsi supporters. Two of them fell down beside him and he felt like he was choking. While running away from the tear gas, he saw blood on the ground. He saw army APCs quickly enter the area of the mosque and heard gunfire, which seemed to come from them, but it was not clear to him whether the security forces were firing in the air, toward the demonstrators, or at the mosque. A wounded officer was lying on the ground, his colleagues attempting to drag him toward them. When it was time to break the fast, Hassan went to Raml Station where he saw a group of “thugs” armed with cleavers and sharpened strips of metal, along with some local residents supporting them. They were saying

that the Brotherhood had started the clashes and bragged that they had injured several Brothers and beaten them violently. They wished that the Interior Ministry would take action to get rid of “the Brotherhood traitors and kill them.”

Alaa Hamouda Hilmi, a building guard in al-Hanofil and a parking attendant at the Qaid Ibrahim Mosque lot, told the EIPR that he broke his fast at one of the public meal tables in Kom al-Dikka. He then immediately headed to the Qaid Ibrahim Mosque parking lot for work, but when he reached the area, he was shot with birdshot in his leg and his head. Some people carried him inside the mosque toward the ablution area. The pro-Morsi demonstrators inside the mosque accused him of being a thug, and they confiscated his mobile phone, his ID, and the LE40 on his person.

When Hilmi asked to go to the bathroom, one of the people detaining him gave him a bottle and told him to use it instead. The same thing happened with other detainees. He said that anyone who opposed this treatment was beaten on the head and face. He added that one of the detainees next to him pulled out a razor, cut himself, and began screaming. One of the people tasked with guarding the civilian detainees attacked him. Hilmi was only able to leave the mosque when army forces extracted him in the morning; he did not retrieve his personal belongings.

In a testimony to EIPR researchers, Mohamed Hamdi Abd al-Ghaffar, a 26-year-old member of Kefaya and the holder of a law degree, said that he was in the area immediately after the Friday prayer with Ahmed Thabet, a member of April 6 who was assaulted by Morsi supporters. He said that a group of teenagers carrying Sisi’s portrait arrived to the area at around 1:30 pm, at which point Morsi supporters attacked them and drove them off. Later, while Abd al-Ghaffar and his friend were sitting at a café, clashes began at Safiya Zaghoul Street. He said that Morsi supporters verbally engaged their opponents and then many people came from the direction of Safiya Zaghoul and the Chamber of Commerce. The two sides clashed and then Morsi supporters withdrew from Safiya Zaghoul Street. Two police APCs then appeared and parked at the Strand Cinema, located on the corner of Saad Zaghoul and Safiya Zaghoul. The clashes moved to the Qaid Ibrahim parking lot, after which marine forces arrived and separated the two sides, setting up a 50-meter space between them in front of the main door of the mosque. But the forces did not approach the area behind the mosque, which became the site of the clashes between the two sides. Abd al-Ghaffar said that he saw several Morsi supporters with shotguns.

He said that police fired heavy tear gas in the area between the two sides, but the wind carried it toward the supporters of the deposed president. He added that he saw “thugs” assault bearded men; they even attacked a bearded man who was among the army supporters standing in front of the mosque door. Before the dusk prayer, clashes renewed. At this point, Abd al-Ghaffar said, two masked men appeared from the direction of the ablution area wearing black and carrying assault rifles. Others came from next to the UNESCO building and the women’s entrance of the mosque. They attacked an officer there. While Abd al-Ghaffar was attempting to leave, he saw a marine vehicle fire rounds of live ammunition, as far as he could tell, to remove the injured officer; as a result of the gunfire, several other people were injured. Abd al-Ghaffar said that the masked men were aiming their weapons at stomach level and below and firing heavily. At the time of the dusk prayer, Morsi supporters gathered near the mosque parking lot while army supporters assembled at the Wadi Cafeteria. Things calmed down and then police forces fired two tear gas canisters. Abd al-Ghaffar then learned that his friend, Ahmed Thabet, had been detained in the mosque. He contacted some of his Brotherhood friends, one of whom went and sat with Thabet in the mosque until the morning. According to Abd al-Ghaffar, Thabet told him that while he was detained in the mosque, Sheikh al-Mahlawi, the imam and preacher, told his cohorts, “Kill them because they’re infidels and they attack mosques.”

Galal Ateito Ibrahim Gomaa, a 54-year-old lawyer at the Gomhouriya General Hospital and a resident of Kormouz, was present at the prayer in al-Qaid Ibrahim. He told EIPR researchers that he took part in the demonstration from the beginning. It was initially calm, but immediately after the Friday prayer, no more than 30 teenagers—the oldest no more than 18, according to Gomaa—arrived carrying Sisi pictures and chanting for him. A group of pro-Morsi demonstrators chased them away, but a half hour later, a large group of people came from the direction of the Cecil Hotel—Gomaa estimated there were about 500 people—carrying fireworks, shotguns, and firearms:

“

In the beginning, they threw bricks at us, but myself and those with me had no bricks or weapons. They tried to storm the mosque area toward us. There were two police APCs behind them. Many people on our side went over toward the Italian Consulate and clashed with them before they reached the mosque parking lot to push them away and force them to retreat...It was a lot of back and forth between the two sides until

the police fired tear gas and birdshot in the middle of the mosque parking lot, after they had fired tear gas in the area separating the two sides, near the tram tracks at the Qaid Ibrahim station.

27 July: the war memorial and Nasr Road

Clashes between pro-Morsi demonstrators and police forces occurred on the Nasr Road at dawn on Saturday, 27 July, following the demonstrations called by al-Sisi to grant the state a mandate to fight terrorism. The clashes left 91 people dead. Although the Ministry of Interior, in a statement issued on 27 July, denied it had used firearms to disperse demonstrators, who had assembled to march toward the October Bridge onramp in an attempt to cut the road, eyewitnesses, video footage, and preliminary death reports confirmed that birdshot and live ammunition were both used heavily. Deaths resulting in gunshot wounds to the head and chest suggest there may have been intent to kill, while an examination of video footage and witness testimony indicates no real, ongoing threat to life that would require the police use lethal force.

The EIPR met with eyewitnesses, victims' relatives, and doctors at hospitals that treated injured persons and admitted the dead; it also visited the Zeinhom Morgue on Saturday morning, 27 July. According to the accounts of witnesses and area residents, the events began around midnight on Friday, 26 July, and lasted until the early morning hours on Saturday, no later than 7:30 or 8 am. A few testimonies differed as to the time the police forces began using live ammunition, which is when large numbers of people were killed. Some of the injured and those who took part in the demonstration stated that people began to be killed and injured at around 1 am, which is consistent with television news reports at the time. But many witnesses and residents of the areas around the clashes denied this and said that the violence grew worse and live ammunition—specifically, automatic weapons—were used starting shortly before 4 am. It was then, they said, that the heavy gunfire began and continued.

The clashes began on Nasr Road after several protestors from the Rabaa al-Adawiya sit-in went to the war memorial area and then the October Bridge onramp and attempted to march on the bridge. Other demonstrators started to erect barriers across Nasr Road using paving stones taken from the sidewalks on either side of the road.

Mohamed Wasfi, a 25-year-old publisher and resident of a building overlooking Nasr Road near the onramp to the October Bridge, said:



The clashes began maybe before midnight. A big demonstration of pro-[Morsi] people came toward the October Bridge. There were three police APCs parked there closing

the bridge. There were a lot of demonstrators, maybe 3,000 or 4,000. The police APCs were parked on the onramp with metal barriers in front of them. Some young demonstrators advanced and tried to make a human chain in front of the barriers to prevent clashes with the Interior Ministry, but they couldn't. People began to move the barriers, and some people were pouring oil on the road to prevent cars from moving. They started throwing bricks and the Interior Ministry responded with tear gas. Then I saw them exchange tear gas and shotgun fire, from the Interior Ministry, which was firing from inside the APCs, and from some of the demonstrators.

“

I didn't see or hear live ammunition until nearly dawn, and I was filming the whole time. What happened was that fights started in the interior streets. I heard them behind our buildings. I couldn't see what happened out back, the area at the onramp to the bridge was in front of me. Local guys started whistling and some went out to protect the area and locals' cars. They threw bricks at the demonstrators, and the demonstrators retreated to behind Azhar University. At that point, the clashes moved toward the war memorial. At that time, I couldn't see because they had moved away from the building, but I heard automatic gunfire for the first time at 3:30 or 4 am. Then I saw the Interior Ministry and locals running, and after that I saw the Interior Ministry people standing in their place and the sound of gunfire. It didn't stop until maybe 7 am, but I couldn't tell where it was coming from.”

The EIPR spoke with several witnesses who participated in the demonstrations and with the relatives of some victims.

The brother of one victim—Ibrahim Mohamed Ibrahim, who was killed at around 7 am on 27 July—described the scene near the war memorial when the demonstrators tried to build barriers with bricks:

“

We were building barriers between us, maybe five barriers, to keep them from entering the sit-in and to protect the women and children. First they fired tear gas inside the barriers, then birdshot, then live ammunition, at first at the memorial. After they were about to enter with their APCs, the army fired five or six rounds in the air—that was about 1 am or a little later—to push them back and separate us. They

pushed them back about 200 meters. That was after called on God for help. When we saw the Interior Ministry coming to attack us, we returned to our positions behind the barricades. A little while later, the Interior Ministry people came back and fired tear gas inside the barriers, it crossed two or three of the barriers. They kept firing gas and then birdshot inside the sit-in. People died at the mosque minaret and the memorial.”

Another witness, who asked to remain anonymous, said:

“

After the march set out from the Rabaa al-Adawiya Mosque and moved toward the October Bridge, the residents there harassed them and then the police intervened. An armored vehicle faced the people who had gone on the bridge and forced them back down with tear gas. Then the police were firing at us. People were standing next to them in regular clothes, also with weapons and firing at us.

Another witness, who asked to remain anonymous, said that the clashes began before midnight, but he put the peak of the clashes at between midnight and 6 am:

“

The firing started at 9 pm and lasted until 6 am, but a massacre took place between midnight and 6 am. There was a lot of heavy shooting at us. Sometimes tear gas, birdshot, and live ammunition were fired at us all at once.

Several witnesses said they clearly saw police personnel, in both uniform and civilian garb, firing automatic weapons at the demonstrators. This video footage³⁰ shows police personnel on Nasr Road using automatic weapons early on the morning of 27 July.

The EIPR also obtained the testimony of Amr Ismailawi, a 23-year-old member of the My Right campaign, who was present at the Zeinhom Morgue from Saturday morning, 27 July, until the evening:

“

I always go to the morgue during such events and I never saw so many bodies. The bodies started arriving at 9 am, shortly before I got there. The ambulance would come carrying at least two corpses and sometimes five. The number of bodies in

30- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Msz1JwqOKRI&feature=share&oref=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2F-watch%3Fv%3DMsz1JwqOKRI%26feature%3Dshare&has_verified=1&bpctr=1375021800

the morgue was extraordinary. By breakfast, there were six bodies that we couldn't even fit inside. We counted nearly 90 corpses. When we left, the medics were telling us that some cases had been taken to other hospitals and might be coming to the morgue.

On 28 July, a source in the medical examiner's office told Amnesty International researchers that 80 bodies had arrived to the Forensic Medicine Authority from the Rabaa events, including 13 unidentified bodies, 40 cases of wounds by bullets that had exited the body, 7 cases in which the bullet—a 9mm—was still in the body, one case with a 7.62 mm bullet still in the body, and three cases in which the bullet exited the body but the shell casing remained in the bones. This is in addition to 8 cases with only shotgun wounds, 3 cases with wounds from both live ammunition and birdshot, and one case of blunt-force head trauma. The statement was made before all the bodies had been autopsied. In the last statement given by the authority on the events, in October 2013, the authority stated that there were 95 deaths.³¹ In the same statement, it said that 6.35 mm ammunition was found in some of the bodies, in addition to the aforementioned calibers. The Interior Ministry announced that one policeman had been killed in the events, Capt. Sherif al-Sibai with the CSF, who died on 29 July as result of birdshot injuries in the eye and head.³²

31- al-Masry al-Youm, 31 Oct. 2013, <<http://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/331671>>.

32- <<http://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/242263>>.

Part three:

dispersal of sit-ins at Rabaa al-Adawiya and Nahda Square

Of the incidents documented in this report, the dispersal of the sit-in at Rabaa al-Adawiya saw the largest number of victims, the most excessive use of force, and the most violations. Several policemen and civilians were also killed in related violent incidents around the capital and in the governorates. This section looks at the dispersal of the sit-ins at length in an attempt to gain a detailed picture of the sequence of events and document violations and particular incidents that led to an intensification of the violence. It also attempts to give as precise an account as possible from the view of witnesses of controversial moments or instances in which officials' accounts differ from those of the demonstrators and the wounded, such as the causes for the clash, the use of lethal force, the difficult working conditions for paramedics, whether safe exits were set up, and the demonstrators' use of force or firearms in the face of the onslaught by security forces. The final death toll from the dispersal of the Rabaa and Nahda sit-ins and related incidents of violence remains disputed; the Ministry of Health has still not issued an official statement on the number of dead. The ministry stopped issuing official statements on the dispersal of the sit-ins on 15 August, at a time when all the bodies had not yet been moved to hospitals or the Zeinhom Morgue. The lowest casualty estimates, however, make it clear that the dispersal of the Rabaa sit-in was the most violent incident since 28 January 2011, known as the Friday of Rage.

Before the dispersal

On the evening of 31 July 2013, the Cabinet, through Minister of Information Dorriya Sharaf al-Din, announced it had tasked the interior minister with clearing the sit-ins at Nahda and Rabaa and “taking all measures necessary in this regard in the framework of the provisions of the constitution and law.”³³ In a statement issued by the presidency on 4 August, the National Defense Council confirmed its support for the government “in all steps and measures that it has already begun to take in the framework of instituting security across the nation and confronting

33- <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQvkqyMr-cE>> and <<http://www.egynews.net/wps/portal/news?params=245736>>.

threats and security breaches by the assemblies at Rabaa al-Adawiya and al-Nahda, in accordance with the letter of the law and with respect for human rights.”³⁴

Some supporters of the roadmap led a media campaign that attempted to drum up popular acceptance of the violent dispersal of the sit-ins by the deposed president’s supporters. In the final days of July and until the dispersal, several news reports and statements were aired alleging that the sit-ins were packed with various types of weapons. It was even claimed that heavy weaponry was present and that missiles inside the sit-ins were targeting vital installations in the country. These claims were made on widely watched television channels.³⁵ Citizens filed complaints with the public prosecutor making similar allegations, according to the media,³⁶ and similar news reports were published in the state-owned and independent press. After the government authorized the interior minister to clear the two sit-ins, analyses, news reports, and statements were constantly published linking the Rabaa sit-in to terrorism.³⁷

On the ground, the Interior Ministry took no actions to prepare for the dispersal; protesters continued to enter and exit the site until immediately before it was cleared. In fact, people continued to enter even during the dispersal, and no safe passages were provided for protesters to leave the site, although the ministry announced the existence of safe exits more than once. A delegation of rights representatives met with Prime Minister Hazem Beblawi and other officials on the evening of 30 July.³⁸ The delegation explained that any attempt to forcibly disperse the Rabaa sit-in could result in more than 700 dead and hundreds injured, based on estimates of the size of the sit-in and the assessment of the Interior Ministry’s recent performance.

The dispersal

Information and testimony obtained by the EIPR indicates that anywhere from 499 to 1,000 civilians (non-security personnel) were killed in the clearing of the Rabaa al-Adawiya sit-in. This large gap cannot be narrowed and no definitive death toll given without judicial investigations

34- <<http://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/379453.aspx>>.

35- <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1UPIWrdclE>>.

36- <<http://www.akhbarelyom.com/News/Print?ID=195568>> and <<http://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/242299>>.

37- See for example, <<http://www1.youm7.com/News.asp?NewsID=1186566#.UwBJokKSzDk>>.

38- Hossam Bahgat, then the executive director of the EIPR, and Karim Ennarah, researcher at EIPR’s criminal justice unit, attended the meeting.

by officials authorized to subpoena witnesses and death certificates, question any person, and view official documents that include the names of persons admitted to hospitals on that day, the registers of health directorates that issued burial permits, other documentation, and the records of various state bodies. In the sole official statement about the death toll, then-Prime Minister Hazem al-Beblawi told al-Masry al-Youm, “I think the number of bodies was close to 1,000.” He added, “We expected much more than what happened on the ground. The final outcome was less than we expected.”³⁹

At the same time, Muslim Brotherhood leaders—at least those present in the sit-in—made no effort to minimize the number of their supporters in the sit-in when the dispersal began and the extreme danger facing protesters became clear. Marches continued to reach the environs of the sit-in until the late afternoon of the day of the dispersal.

It was not easy to confirm many details of the circumstances of the clashes, which lasted for at least 11 hours and involved many fronts. But the findings of EIPR’s investigation confirmed that security forces failed to plan for the operation in a way that considered the importance of minimizing human casualties. They showed extreme disregard for the lives of citizens at the sit-in and imposed collective punishment on any person in the area, especially after some protesters—a small number by most estimates—used firearms and exchanged fire with police.

Available evidence suggests that unlawful lethal force was used in more than one case and that many protesters were targeted while fleeing with no evidence that they were in possession of weapons. The evidence indicates that security forces failed to secure a safe exit for protesters who wanted to leave and escape attempts by residents of the neighboring buildings to harass or assault them. On 1 and 4 August, the Interior Ministry issued statements urging the protesters to leave the squares, but it gave no deadline for the evacuation. It also stated that the sit-in would be gradually cleared. The rapid escalation of violence from 6 to 7 am on the day of the dispersal is most likely due to the fact that police forces did not have a plan to deal with the possibility of resistance; at worst, it made no attempt to maintain discipline when the slightest threat issued from the protesters.

It is clear from the testimonies and materials available to the EIPR that a number of protesters

39- <<http://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/261970>>.

used firearms, but it is difficult to determine when they began to use them and how much ammunition was used. According to the observations of researchers and journalists' accounts, several protesters used bricks, Molotovs, and primitive homemade shotguns while a fewer number used live ammunition and shot at police forces, killing several policemen. It is clear, however, from eyewitness testimony and journalists, and the comparison of casualties on both sides, that the overwhelming majority of the protesters at the Rabaa sit-in were unarmed. Moreover, the Interior Ministry's official statement that police forces had found ten automatic weapons and 29 shotguns confirms that this level of violent intervention and lethal force was unwarranted. Video footage also shows that many of those killed constituted no threat at all and that indiscriminate shooting by police for long periods killed many innocents, some while they were trying to escape or hide; these actions may constitute criminal acts.

EIPR researchers spoke to more than 40 people, among them demonstrators, the wounded, field doctors and paramedics, and journalists and correspondents on the scene, as well as doctors who treated the injured, volunteers who helped to count the dead and document deaths and injuries, and government officials. EIPR researchers also helped to count the dead, provided legal aid at the Forensic Medicine Authority, and were present at hospitals and the Zeinhom Morgue, which allowed them to survey several bodies, see death reports, and view preliminary autopsy reports. EIPR researchers and the authors of this report also looked at field reports about the incident and reviewed official statements and statements from government officials and Interior Ministry leaders.

Due to the magnitude of the violations, the unprecedented level of violence, the broad scope of the confrontations, and the persistence of clashes throughout the day, as well the numerous fronts of the clashes, the contradictions in many accounts, the arrest of a great many people present or the issuance of arrest warrants for many eyewitnesses, including some field doctors, accounts of this incident were by far the most challenging to confirm and collate with available evidence, and the observations of researchers with the EIPR and other rights groups present on the scene in order to produce a detailed, coherent account.

The police had no plan to address the violence that followed the dispersal, the most prominent examples being the clashes in Mohandiseen and in Kerdasa police station, as well as the burning of dozens of churches, in whole or part, in several governorates.

Death toll

Even now, it is difficult to accurately identify the number of casualties due to the lack of official records containing the names of the dead, the unprecedented huge number of victims, and the mixing of bodies of people possibly killed at the sit-ins with those killed in civilian clashes or in confrontations with security forces in other places at the same time. Making it even more difficult to reach an accurate count of victims at the sit-in is the fact that the Health Ministry stopped updating the casualty count after 15 August, when all the bodies had not yet been taken to the Forensic Medicine Authority. Indeed, at that time, not all bodies had been removed from the mosques in the Rabaa area. It appeared that the government was attempting to quash information or prohibit official bodies (specifically, the Paramedics Agency and the Ministry of Health) from giving statements about the number of casualties. There were too many bodies for medical examiners to perform autopsies to the satisfaction of the victims' families, leading some to acquire burial permits before the body was brought before the medical examiner and prior to obtaining any preliminary medical reports or even allowing an external examination of the body.

Several civil society groups attempted to maintain a count of the bodies. The Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights made the most effort to count the number of people killed during the clearing of the two sit-ins and even now their estimates of victims at Rabaa range from 700 to 932 dead. It was also difficult to confirm with any accuracy the location where many people were killed when their bodies were in hospitals far from Nasr City. The official spokesman for the Forensic Medicine Authority stated on 13 September that the department had conducted autopsies for 333 bodies in connection with the dispersal at Rabaa, including seven policemen, in addition to 173 cases that reportedly did not reach the department, in a reference to the bodies found in the Iman Mosque. This brought the number of civilian casualties from Rabaa to 499, according to the Forensic Medicine Authority. The EIPR counted 210 bodies inside the Iman Mosque.

Thus, the number of civilian casualties from the Rabaa sit-in between 499 and 932 according to ECESCR, which EIPR believes is a more accurate estimate as well as being closer to the estimate of Prime Minister Biblawy.

The layout of the sit-in and the beginning of clashes

Witnesses differ slightly in their account of when police forces arrived and the operation began. There are sharper divergences when it comes to estimating the time when live ammunition was first used and whether the police use of live ammunition was a response to protestors using weapons in an attempt to prevent the clearing or if police escalated with live ammunition in the absence of a threat warranting lethal force.

Up to 14 August, the sit-in had expanded markedly and stretched to Tayaran Street in the south and up to nearly Sa>a Square in the north. The number of participants in the sit-in, according to the estimate of researchers and journalists, passed 100,000 at peak times, while at least 10,000 demonstrators slept at the site most days. This meant it was exceedingly difficult to clear the sit-in without the death of hundreds, perhaps impossible, considering the limited abilities of the police to engage with demonstrations and large assemblies where a small number of those present may engage in violence.

In a meeting with the government prior to the dispersal, the EIPR warned that the losses caused by dispersing the sit-in (the expected loss in life and legal violations), and in addition the short and medium term political and security repercussions would far outweigh any potential benefits (the imposition of order or an end to alleged or documented violations by protestors). The EIPR noted that regardless of the emphasis on discipline and self-control by political leadership and the Cabinet, the history of Egyptian security forces' engagement with public disorder in the previous three years demonstrated their limited capacities and their tendency to either intervene with excessive violence.

Police forces surrounded the sit-in and attempted to storm it from the southern entrance on Tayaran Street, as well as from the street next to the Tiba Mall and the entrances on Abbas al-Aqqad Street. According to two journalists who were present before the operation began and several eyewitnesses taking part in the sit-in, police forces began to arrive, warnings were announced, and the protestors were put on the alert very early in the morning, between 5:45 and 6 am. But accounts differ as to when exactly the clashes began. It is also difficult to pinpoint when police began to use live ammunition and when people began to be killed. The first testimony that confirmed seeing a person felled by live ammunition estimated the time at 7 am or slightly earlier.



[Map of the Rabaa al-Adawiya area]

Witness testimonies on the dispersal of the Rabaa sit-in

Alastair Beach, a correspondent for the British Independent, told the EIPR that he reached the site of the sit-in at 8 am and managed to enter from the back streets parallel to Tayaran and off Mohamed Mandour Street. He reached the heart of the sit-in where the clashes were already underway. The same path was used by several correspondents and also often permitted demonstrators to enter and exit without being intercepted by police or army forces. Nevertheless, this path and the surrounding streets were not always safe, according to eyewitnesses, since some local residents were standing by and harassed demonstrators. Beach said that before he reached the inside of the sit-in, he saw a police force near the east entrance, including a policeman who was brandishing an automatic weapon and firing toward the area behind the sit-in, beyond the Rabaa al-Adawiya Mosque and the reception hall, along Tayaran Street toward Nasr City. But he said that at that point early in the morning, he did not hear repetitive automatic shots, but only the sound of a semi-automatic and single bursts of fire. Beach estimated that the gunfire continued sporadically from 8 am, when he arrived, until he left at 5 pm and that the number of injured persons started to climb an hour or more after his arrival. He saw many bullet wounds in the head and chest. Most of the time, Beach was in the main field hospital (located in the Rabaa al-Adawiya Mosque reception hall since the beginning of the sit-in), where he counted the number of bodies he himself saw. By late morning, there were 42 bodies of demonstrators in one room, referred to as the morgue to distinguish it from other rooms used primarily to treat the wounded, but which at times held the bodies of people recently killed. He then counted 31 bodies in another room in the same building, as well as 25 bodies in a tent behind the main stage and 11 inside the mosque main prayer area. In total, Beach counted 109 bodies from the morning until he left at 5 pm. He estimated that the great majority of them were injured in the chest, neck, and head.

In a testimony he published on his Facebook page and in a telephone interview with the EIPR, the then BBC correspondent Khaled Ezz al-Arab described what he saw when he reached the site at 8 am. As soon as he entered Rabaa from Abbas al-Aqqad, he said, he saw an elderly bearded man who was injured in the upper thigh; he was told that it was a gunshot wound. At the same time, he saw a police armored vehicles moving two soldiers with surface wounds, whose nature he could not identify. Ezz al-Arab witnessed clashes between police and army forces and pro-army citizens on one side and demonstrators on the other, while security forces attempted

to push back the demonstrators with tear gas and birdshot. Describing the scene early in the morning, he said, “Tayaran Street, where Rabaa al-Adawiya Mosque is located, had turned into something like a warzone: barriers and mounds of rubble, burned tents, scattered patches of fire, and overturned cars. And the whole time, the sound of bullets and explosions.” Ezz al-Arab’s account was consistent with that of other witnesses who said that the gunfire became more frequent in the afternoon. “At about 2 pm, suddenly a large march appeared coming from a mosque in Nasr City,” he said. “Hundreds of angry men and youths promising to ‘slaughter Sisi.’ One of them yelled at the camera, ‘We’ll slaughter all the Christians!’” Ezz al-Arab and the BBC crew managed to make it to the heart of the sit-in at this time, joining one of the marches. He added, “In a tall building under construction, dozens of men occupied several floors and were throwing rocks and Molotovs at the forces advancing toward the heart of the sit-in. I saw no firearms with the demonstrators, but one of them told me that his colleague had used an automatic weapon against an armored vehicle that morning and he had been killed on the spot.” Ezz al-Arab only saw police forces shooting over the heads of arriving demonstrators to disperse them. He was told they were blanks, but he saw bullet holes on the walls of a house, and he thinks the security forces were firing live ammunition in the air to disperse the protestors.

Ezz al-Arab was able to cross to the other side of the clashes where security forces were engaging with protestors in the center of the sit-in. The protestors were chanting, “With spirit and blood, we will redeem you, Islam.” He said paramedics confirmed that seven people with gunshot wounds had already been moved at that early hour. While Ezz al-Arab was around the entrances of the sit-in from 8 am to 3 pm, he only saw tear gas and birdshot fired at demonstrators, and live ammunition fired in the air to disperse them. He reached the field hospital (the second field hospital in a building adjacent to the mosque) and counted six bodies of protestors in one room and 44 in another. He told EIPR researchers, “Most of the gunfire was in the air, but during the periods of direct clashes, like when the demonstrators entered the Toum wa Basal [restaurant] building on Nozha Street, live ammunition was fired directly at the protestors in the building. I didn’t see anyone die with my own eyes.”

Lawyer Ahmed Mefreh, a witness who was at the scene of the sit-in before police forces arrived, told EIPR researchers:



“I woke up to the sound of the media center telling everyone to get up, at 5 am. I went to the field hospital right away. The first injury I saw was a gunshot wound. The sound of gunfire, which was constant, was semi-automatic, I think. The shooting stopped for a bit at 11 am then they started firing tear gas and entering with bulldozers. The people tried to deal with the bulldozers. They were saying that they [security forces] had started to pull back and there were demonstrations coming and that they had stopped attacking the sit-in, but at about 2 pm, or a little before, the gunfire grew very heavy and we suddenly heard very heavy automatic fire.

Mefreh was in the reception hall most of the time, until he left at about 5 pm:



In the beginning, I was in the morgue, a small room next to the main field hospital. There were 44 bodies there, all of them without exception had been shot in the upper body and many, I would estimate that most of them were shot in the head. A smaller number had been shot in the chest. The door to that morgue closed after it had been filled with those 44 bodies. I went to the second room where there were more bodies crowded in...I personally only saw tear gas, which they were firing deep into the site. At 11:30, they fired tear gas that reached the field hospital. When the security forces started firing indiscriminately, bullets hit the facade of the hospital. I think it was about 4 pm when the bullet hit the hospital.

Journalist Maged Atef was also at the site of the sit-in before police and army forces arrived. The EIPR interviewed him at length since he wrote in detail about what he saw at more than one location and during several important incidents. Atef said that the protestors were still sleeping until 5 or 5:30 am, when megaphones started to wake them up and instructed them to assemble; no mention was made of the possibility of dispersal, and this was before the forces arrived. The call to prayer went out over the megaphones, but it was not prayer time. Atef added that Safwat Hegazi, a prominent Morsi supporter, took to the main stage at about 5:30 am, but Atef could not make out what he said. Atef told EIPR:



The banging on the metal sheets started shortly before 6, to raise the alarm. I moved toward Tayaran Street and saw two Fahd APCs coming from Salah Salem toward Nasr Road. The protestors began assembling, and a quarter-hour later I heard police megaphones saying, “The Interior Ministry urges the protestors to evacuate the site.

The secure exit is by the war memorial. We pledge not to pursue protestors.”

An air of anticipation lasted for three or four minutes at most, as Maged described, people began to talk about a trap:

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There was commotion. People wanted to leave and were told it was a trap. I tried to leave from the small back streets behind the Mobil gas station on the road leading to Salah Salem. Traffic was normal. People were out and no one asked me where I was coming from or going to. But I saw six bearded youths under arrest, their hands tied in plastic cuffs. I don't know why they were stopped. It was only them who were in custody, other people were coming and going.

Atef said that taking the same road back into the sit-in, he saw popular committees, most likely formed by local residents. He tried to explain that the security forces had allowed people to leave and that standing there was preventing the protestors from using the safe exit. They did not respond and seemed to be waiting to stop and arrest Brotherhood people. Atef also saw a former officer, a resident of the officers' buildings next to Tayaran Street, standing in front of his home with a dagger. He continued:

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At 6:30, I went back to the gas station on the corner of Tayaran Street. Lots of tear gas had been fired and the protestors had started throwing Molotovs and bricks. The women had disappeared completely, running toward the mosque. There was no organization. The small field hospital next to the gas station had disappeared. Some television stations reported 40 deaths by 7:15 am, but that hadn't happened. At that time, I had moved to the Tiba Mall area. The first time I personally heard gunfire was at 8 am, coming from Abbas al-Aqqad. But there could have been shots fired from Tayaran Street and I just didn't hear...At 8 am, it was said in the sit-in area where the fighting was that there were casualties, but until 10 am, I saw no bodies. At about 10, I saw the Fox News correspondent take a bullet. At the Tiba Mall, the bulldozers began to move at 8 or 8:30, removing the barriers. The protestors had put butane canisters at the barriers as a kind of obstacle. They tried to do the same thing at Tayaran Street, but couldn't because of the tear gas and birdshot. The bulldozers threw off one of the canisters and it exploded, one protestor died in the blast.

Atef said that he saw the exchange of gunfire at around 10:30 am on Tayaran Street, between three police armored vehicles (one Fahd and two of the new kind) and people he could not see, who were positioned in the building under construction overlooking Tayaran Street. He said that policemen were deployed behind the armored vehicle and traded fire with a party he could not see on top of the building. He saw a police brigadier general felled by a gunshot that came from the direction of the protestors at about 2 pm or shortly thereafter. He believes this incident is what sparked the violent battle that lasted for hours and why police fired indiscriminately with automatic weapons, killing so many. Atef's description of the battle and the shooting of the police office is consistent with other witnesses' testimony that the gunfire escalated dramatically in the afternoon. Atef said:



Police forces entered from the direction of the Tiba Mall, armored vehicles and bulldozers. A police brigadier general got out,⁴⁰ I think from the special operations. He wasn't holding a weapon and he was speaking into a megaphone. He was standing facing the Rabaa Mosque area and the reception hall. I was standing closer to the gas station and saw him. It was about 200 meters from me to the mosque. There were many people still around it. The general spoke into the megaphone and directed his words to the people in the mosque and reception hall. A shot was fired at him from the mosque that sent him flying backwards... As soon as he fell, the gunfire started for real, a real war, with the exchange of gunfire. I saw automatic fire on both sides. The police returned fire, and there was fire coming from the direction of the mosque as well. I ran away after that, it was very dangerous to stand there. People began to move back and after that, it was like catching mice. Either people would die or they would exit and be grabbed. The automatic fire was very heavy. Before that it was semi-automatic maybe, or individual shots. I saw soldiers fall too. The protestors who were killed were mostly further inside and I didn't see them.

Atef described the scene on more than one front; he attempted to continually monitor events in the area of the Tiba Mall and on the other front, facing Tayaran Street:

40- This could not be confirmed from other sources, but many witnesses noted an increase in the violence and gunfire at approximately the same time. The identity of the officer who was killed could not be confirmed. While the witness believed the officer was a brigadier general, he was not absolutely certain, since he was standing at a distance that did not permit him to confirm the rank.

I saw the second-tier Brotherhood leader Mohamed Ali Ibrahim, he wasn't armed. He gathered some people and tried to make a gap in the police ranks, with the other demonstrators. The biggest weapon I saw personally with the demonstrators standing in the street was homemade shotguns, just a few. I saw that with my own eyes. But Mohamed Ali had nothing with him. He moved toward the police to stop them from advancing and I heard him say, "We can stop them from advancing and it will be a clear victory." Then he was shot in the neck and fell. That was maybe before 3 pm. The shot was fired from the direction of Tayaran Street.

Atef confirmed other witnesses' accounts that army forces did not engage and that police forces undertook the entire mission. Atef again tried to leave from the street leading to Salah Salem at around 1:30 pm. He succeeded and then returned inside the clashes. He says the implements he personally saw demonstrators use in an attempt to hold back the assault were no more than bricks, Molotovs, and a very few homemade shotguns. But he confirms that he heard shots from automatic rifles coming from the mosque and reception hall and from the unfinished building on Tayaran Street. Atef took out notes he had made at the time. For 3 pm, he had written, "Gunfire now ongoing for one hour, I can't make out the type of weapon. The battleground is the area facing the mosque. I hear automatic gunfire from both sides. Impossible to approach."

Atef continued:



At 4:30 or 5 [pm], it was over. The forces were very close and the gunfire from inside the sit-in had petered out. The road on Salah Salem was opened and the barbed wire was removed. Abbas al-Aqqad was opened. They [protestors] exited from Salah Salem in huge numbers in front of me. No one accosted them, but the cars wouldn't stop for them. Many people were cursing them and gloating.

Mosaab Elshamy, a freelance photojournalist, reached the sit-in area shortly before 8 am and attempted to enter from the south entrance next to the Azhar University buildings, but the way was blocked. He was forced with others toward Nasr City, to the only road that was open. When he reached the area of the second Nasr City police station, he found a cluster of army forces and CSF standing with several local residents. The sound of tear gas being fired could be heard from nearby, and he could see the smoke rising from inside the sit-in. But they were not allowed

to approach any further. As soon as he arrived, he saw several individuals under arrest near the main stage, being put inside a police truck:

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The sound of gunfire did not cease. We went right again and then the first left and found a street that would take us to the reception hall. The only road that was open. [This is the same back way leading to the reception hall that was described by more than one witness.]...I saw very large army armored vehicles, beige, removing the tents and gaining ground. There were three clashes underway at the time, at the Tiba Mall, the war memorial intersection, and on Tayaran Street. There were terrifying sniper fire at the Tiba Mall. We stood for a long time at the building under construction listening to the Interior Ministry's taped message while the protestors tried to draw battle lines. The protestors were pulling up the tents and throwing them in the fire to stop the advance. The fire grew very large, and they succeeded to a great degree.

Elshamy's account of protestors lighting huge fires with car tires to stop the advance of security forces is consistent with that of numerous witnesses. It appears to have at least slowed the police advance. It may also explain some of the burn injuries and burning of buildings, as well as the fact that some bodies were charred. Elshamy continued:

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I was hearing all kinds of bullets. I stayed at that front from 8 am to 11 or 12. I saw nearly 100 people get killed in front of me, all of them shot in the chest and head. I photographed some of the injuries and injured people I saw, most of them unarmed. The worst thing I saw were fireworks, personally I mean. I saw no one armed myself. But in my opinion, the fire went out of control until it started to consume the tents and wood.

Elshamy then moved to the fight in the area of the Tiba Mall:

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At midday, I approached the front at the Tiba Mall. I heard gunfire coming from the buildings inside the sit-in toward the forces deployed at the Tiba Mall. People were praising God and joyous, but I don't know what it was or where it came from...In general, I didn't hear automatic gunfire, just semi-automatic and sniper fire. There was birdshot of course. At one point, I was standing at the intersection near the

building where people were said to be hiding, at about 2 pm. I heard a bullet pass right next to my ear. As for the army, I saw them, but I was behind them and they were closing the road. The Interior Ministry formations were in front of them.

Elshamy described the scene inside the field hospital and the injuries he documented in more detail:



As soon as I entered the media center, I found they'd turned it into a hospital. It was 11:30 am. Half of the people there were injured and being treated and the other half were corpses. I walked by about 40 corpses, they hadn't been shrouded yet. I photographed numerous injuries: gunshots wounds in the face and chest, the hands and legs tied. I saw a dead paramedic, but I did not see any ambulances at all inside the sit-in itself. Some injured people were being moved to ambulances outside the sit-in area. The friends of the paramedic who was dying begged the doctors to help, but no one could do anything for him.

Elshamy left the sit-in before police forces gained control and the rest of the protestors exited en masse. Speaking of his attempt to leave, he said there were no police forces, but there were popular committees engaging in violence; they stole his camera.

Ibrahim al-Masri,⁴¹ a photojournalist taking part in the sit-in, said in his testimony to EIPR researchers:



I had spent the night at the sit-in and the first confirmed news that reached me was that the Nahda sit-in was surrounded. That was at daybreak nearly. At 6:30 am in Rabaa, the first thing I saw were two CSF vehicles, a police truck, a carrier coming from Salah Salem and entering Youssef Abbas. The people on the front lines moved toward the earthen mounds and started throwing bricks and chanting, "God is great." Then I went to Tiba Mall. I couldn't pass after the Traffic Administration building because of the heavy sniper fire. There was the sound of gunfire, tear gas, and heavy black smoke at Tiba Mall. The first victim I saw was at 7 am. I started to see people being carried. I was standing exactly between the field hospital and the

41- Al-Masri filmed video footage showing many details of the clashes, available on YouTube under the heading "Rabaa documentary"; al-Masri, 23, works at al-Wadi.

traffic building, filming people being carried by and infants who couldn't breathe, kids six or seven years old falling on the ground. I stood in the minaret for an hour. There were dead people inside. Inside the mosque itself, I saw horrible injuries, people with their brains spilling out and their stomachs in a sack. The mosque was very crowded, it and the main field hospital and the media center, which had been turned into a hospital. I saw more than 30 bodies. Nearly all the injuries I saw were to the upper body: the stomach, chest, neck, and head...but I saw some in the pelvis. In the afternoon, tear gas was fired on us inside the hospital...That time they said it was a warning and were calling on people to leave, they were also shooting. They didn't stop to let people leave...I didn't see weapons, I just saw fireworks, being thrown from the Manayfa building [the building under construction on Tayaran Street].

Amr Omran, a demonstrator who was present on the scene from the morning, said:



At 5:40 am, I was at the Mobil entrance. While walking in the sit-in, the sit-in guards were running toward me saying, "They've started the assault, hold firm, hold firm." I started moving through the streets around the sit-in to see what was happening. I went to Youssef Abbas Street and kept walking, then ran into a long line of CSF trucks and armed soldiers. I walked again until I reached the Azhar conference hall, where I found some 15 army armored vehicles parked in a row. I entered Tayaran Street and heard the sound of gunfire, there was a lot of tear gas and birdshot. Then I saw thick black smoke and I knew that people and the demonstrators had lit car tires on fire at the entrances to the square.

Omran related the details of how the clashes developed from inside the sit-in and how the protestors attempted to resist using water and burning tires. He also related that he saw an unarmed demonstrator felled by a bullet in his stomach:



My tent was directly behind the stage. It was a big tent. I thought I'd go there to get my gas mask and goggles. When I entered I found some kids filling up spray bottles with vinegar and yeast for the tear gas and handing out masks to people. At that time, the gas had not yet reached the heart of the square, because there were three levels of security. We just heard the gas fired nonstop and the sound of explosion.

There were barrels of water in the square that we had set up so that if they fired tear gas canisters, we could just throw them in the barrels. I walked toward Nasr Street. People warned us about going further, saying there was gunfire and snipers, and people were dying there. And in fact, while I was standing, there was a man walking in the street with us and I just suddenly saw him on the ground. I approached him and saw blood pouring from his stomach. He was shot in the stomach. People carried him and took him to the field hospital. He had nothing in his hand. A friend told me that he heard security telling people to evacuate and leave from the Nasr Road, but I didn't hear anything because I was in the middle of the square and the sound didn't reach us there. We heard gunfire around us very close by, I heard it hitting the marble, walls, trees, and metal. I sometimes heard the whistle of the bullet as it passed directly by me.

More than one person described seeing armed soldiers on the rooftops of the military buildings around the sit-in. Some described them as snipers while others said they were just securing the buildings and did not shoot. Omran said:

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There was an army building on the square. Soldiers were standing on the roof and we were afraid of them, but people told us they had cameras and were filming only, not shooting. I also saw some young demonstrators, one of them holding a weapon wrapped in a shawl. The young guys were telling him, it's peaceful and they took it to turn over to the stage area...I went back to my tent and found they'd turned it into a field hospital to treat the wounded. The first martyr who entered was totally burned and then there were so many bodies, 80 percent of them shot with live ammunition. The bullet holes were very big...At 4:15 pm, we didn't know where to put the bodies. The tent next to us was packed with bodies and we were forced to put bodies in my tent with the injured people receiving treatment.

Omran claimed that the gunfire was at times indiscriminate:

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I saw a young man in front of me—an adult, not a child—from the terror and because the gunfire was coming from all directions, he was sitting on the ground crying himself into a puddle. In the tent, we were always huddled down because

of the gunfire. This guy I know came in, 26, married, with three kids I think. He came in to ask about a relative and was standing there looking in the middle of all the injured people and bodies. We kept telling him to get down, there was gunfire, when suddenly he took a bullet to the head and fell down dead. The shot came from the direction of Tayaran Street, from around Cook Door [restaurant]. The doctor went over to him, put his head in his lap, and said, "May he rest in peace, he's dead." We were all saying the shahada all the time, we were terrified and thought we'd die at any moment. I saw people writing their names and telephone numbers on their bodies, so someone could be called if they were martyred. I saw an old man write out a piece of paper laying out his debts and his will. I saw a man carrying his son, age 9 or 10. The boy was shot in the head, at the top of his forehead, just at the hairline. The boy was writhing in his father's grasp and his father was bawling and telling him, "Say the shahada, Omar, say it, son."

EIPR researchers interviewed several field doctors, paramedics, and injured persons. Mohamed Rakha was a volunteer field medic at the field hospital; he was shot in two separate incidents on the same day. In the first, he sustained a surface wound on his face, below his eye; the second shot hit his right elbow and caused tearing in the nerve tissue. Rakha said:

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I was outside the day of the dispersal. I arrived at 9:30 am. I was able to enter from Tayaran Street, but I had to loop around. The traffic and ports buildings had snipers standing on the rooftops and I was afraid they'd fire. But I managed to make it inside. At 10:30, I was standing by while people were filming the assault. There were Fahd APCs mounted with automatic weapons on Tayaran Street. The people believed their sit-in was peaceful, and they didn't recognize the legitimacy of the authorities, especially after they shot people dead. So they decided they wouldn't leave and would resist. The building under construction was kind of a high point and people stood in it to deflect the attack. Women in the back were breaking up bricks and the men would gather them in sacks and pass them to the people throwing them. I went up to the third or fourth floor. There was heavy gunfire, but it was intermittent. The shots came from above. People were standing behind the concrete pillars or laying low. We saw the bullets hit the bricks. While I was standing on a

concrete pillar, a bullet came and barely grazed my face. It burned the skin under my eye and bled a little. I went and bandaged the wound at a pharmacy. There were four people from the Red Crescent there that I saw, but I think they came in an individual capacity.

Rakha was injured again late afternoon the same day after the gunfire intensified around Tayaran Street:

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At about 4 pm, there was a dentist I know, Dr. Fathallah Ahmed Fathallah, who was injured in his upper thigh while he was trying to move back slowly. He fell to the ground and started bleeding. Someone went to get him and was injured as well. I saw it, but couldn't get in. The police fire stopped for a few seconds so a colleague and I went and grabbed him by his arms. I was shot in the right elbow, it came from Tayaran Street from behind the medical center. Of course, I didn't who exactly fired the shot. There was a Fahd armored vehicle parked on Tayaran Street, with a mounted gun that rotated 360 degrees. I didn't see the bullet, but the doctors told me the wound was fired from above downwards. I saw blood and the tissue burst. I moved back, but the gunfire would not stop. We moved back more, where the area was relatively secure. There was a second field hospital in the Rabaa al-Adawiya medical center. They covered the wound. There were volunteers moving the wounded in cars. Anyone who wanted to could exit via the back streets, but the small streets. At the main entrances and all the way to the health insurance facility, there was the sound of tear gas canisters and gunfire. The tear gas reached the Nouri Khattab Mosque at times.

In a telephone interview, another injured person who works as a paramedic in a government health unit—he wished to remain anonymous—described the scene:

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I was there from the morning...in a tent on Tayaran Street at the Mobil station. The siege started between 6 and 6:30, and the gunfire started at about 6:30. There was shooting from both ends of Tayaran Street, and Nasr Street was closed at both ends. The armored vehicles and bulldozers entered from the war memorial direction. There were snipers on the roof of the armed forces' financial directorate and on the

roofs of the buildings facing the Rabaa Mosque. They were all masked and wearing black. They started to fire tear gas but quickly turned to birdshot and gunfire. There was lots of resistance...bricks and burning tires. The smoke was used to block the forces' view. Starting at noon, the sound of gunfire and the armored vehicles was hysterical...At 9:30 a man named Hassan al-Banna was martyred behind the gas station on Youssef Abbas. He was shot in the neck and by the time he reached the hospital he was a martyr.

He then described the injury he sustained:

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The injury happened at 11 am. I was standing at the gas station on Tayaran Street... the shot came from on top of the building that's going up. I fell right down and saw a man on the top of the building wearing a black mask. I went to the field hospital, but there were much more critical cases. They bandaged up the wound quickly, and I made a tourniquet and left. I left the sit-in at 4 because the wound kept bleeding. I couldn't find a hospital to admit me. There were so many cases at the Health Insurance Hospital. I later learned that the shot had rent through the entire elbow bone. I left at 4 pm, a taxi took me. There were checkpoints away from the shooting, at the Bukhari Mosque on Youssef Abbas, on Tayaran Street and Abbas al-Aqqad...The taxi got me off of Youssef Abbas near the cemetery road.

Alaa al-Qamhawi, a photojournalist with al-Masry al-Youm, spoke with the EIPR. He was shot and injured while on the job. He gave his account of what he saw:

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I was almost living at the sit-in because of my job. That day I woke up and got a move on, reaching Rabaa at 6:30 or 6:45 am. I entered by the war memorial. The taxi took me a little past the war memorial, the shooting still hadn't started there. There were police standing there preparing themselves. But there was already shooting on Youssef Abbas. As we approached, we saw tear gas and also gunfire. I was hit with birdshot while trying to get in. I heard the sound of live ammunition and saw people falling down. In the morning, it was mostly tear gas and birdshot. As soon as I entered Youssef Abbas, the police came in with the bulldozer on the right while the protestors threw bricks at it. The first injuries I saw by live fire were at 9:30 or 10,

in the reception hall. I left from behind the mosque to go send some things because the internet was mostly cut off. As I was walking in the back streets, I saw a building on a street close to Tayaran with four people wearing black climbing it. They had two automatic weapons and two weapons I couldn't identify.

Al-Qamhawi's description of the scene was similar to that of other journalists who said that the violence intensified after noon:

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When I went back in at 1 pm, people were falling right and left. An armored vehicle was parked on Tayaran Street, and the Brotherhood were setting fire to the tents to reduce the impact of the tear gas and block the view. There were people in the building under construction [overlooking Tayaran Street] throwing Molotovs. At that point, an armored vehicle came with three round portals on the side and opened fire on the people standing on the ground. It was tragic, there was indiscriminate gunfire in the street, and I saw people crying and getting shot. The shooting from the Brotherhood side was coming from the rooftops, like the building under construction. I saw one person on the roof of a building next to the mosque. I was at the mosque and heard gunfire above and saw someone coming out of a window and then go back in, firing toward Abbas al-Aqqad.

Qamhawi then described the moment he was injured:

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Bullets began flying in all directions. My colleagues and I got down on the ground and then I crossed the street to take cover in the building. While I was trying to cross, I was shot in the leg and fell to the ground. A guy standing next to me took a bullet to the head and I saw his brains in front of me...His skull had shattered. The bullet entered my right thigh from behind and came out the front...No one wanted to pick me up because anyone who approached a person on the ground would be shot at...I was afraid to get up because they might shoot me again...When the shooting subsided, I got up quickly and went to the hospital. I saw lots of people walking around holding on to others, one person holding on to the bone of a friend. At 4 or 4:30, I decided to leave. The security forces kept saying to exit at the war memorial, but there was crazy gunfire there. There were people in a tent at the main stage that

wanted to leave. I went and stood near the stage on a corner next to them. I stood there for 45 minutes and couldn't figure out how to leave. The street I'd come in from was closed...It was only the Nasr Road that was open. We saw three officers standing on the roof of the finance building filming. We gestured to the officer, showed him our camera, and made him understand that we wanted to leave, so he gestured to the police to stop firing. They did actually, but when we started to cross, they opened fire again. We gestured to the officer again and he yelled at them and they stopped. We started leaving in huge numbers then.

Violence by protestors

Although witness accounts gave inconsistent responses to some critical questions—most importantly, assessments of the violence used by the protestors to resist the police attack, and thus an assessment of the proportionality of, or need for force by the police—detailed testimonies, video footage, and a comparison of witness and journalist accounts suggests that the overwhelming majority of demonstrators were unarmed or used bricks and at times Molotov cocktails. This was mostly in response to the deaths from gunfire that began at 7 am. In fact, attempting to leave appears to have been risky since the police did not secure a genuinely safe exit route. This is clear from the numerous arrests and the harassment and abuse of protestors and journalists by popular committees or local residents. Nevertheless, it is clear from witness statements that there was an exchange of gunfire between protestors and police at various times and that during these times, live ammunition was used, resulting in the death of several policemen. One witness testified to the death of two soldiers and a police officer; the witness believed the officer was a brigadier general. The Interior Ministry said that in various places around the country 86 police personnel were killed on 14 August, including 30 officers and 56 privates and junior policemen,⁴² but the numbers provided thus far by official bodies do not identify the number of police personnel killed during the clearing of the Rabaa al-Adawiya sit-in⁴³.

Witness testimony also shows that armed elements on the protestors' side were limited to two areas: inside the Rabaa al-Adawiya Mosque or reception hall and in the building under construction overlooking Tayaran Street. The other open areas in which the greatest number of

42- According to figures in official correspondence between the Interior Ministry and the EIPR regarding the number of victims from 14 to 18 August 2013.

43- <http://wikithawra.wordpress.com/>

protestors was killed likely saw no actions that warranted indiscriminate police fire like that described above.

Police control of the sit-in area and the exit of remaining protestors

Alastair Beach, the correspondent for the Independent, said that at around 5 pm, a protestor told him he needed to leave the medical center, parts of which had caught fire. Prior to that, he had moved to the medical center behind the reception hall, where the injured moved after bodies filled up the main field hospital. Beach managed to leave the four-story building, describing it as packed with the injured and dead, especially on the second floor. Police forces sought to organize the exit of the remaining protestors after they reached the Rabaa al-Adawiya Mosque and its annexes. Beach said their manner was a bit rough, but he denied that they used violence or gunfire, with the exception of firing in the air. He also denied that there were any attempts to arrest any of the protestors exiting. He left using the same street by which he entered, passing by Mohamed Mandour Street behind the Rabaa Mosque.

Lawyer Ahmed Mefreh, who was taking part in the sit-in, said that the armed forces opened a safe route behind the mosque and its annexes at about 5:30 pm:

“

There was a closed street...The army opened it at 5:30 pm and made a safe passage so people could leave. The leadership left first. Beltagi was there, and he's the one who told people to leave then. I saw police standing there, among them three masked men wearing black and carrying what I think were M16s. People left quickly and there were many of them. There was still the muffled sound of gunfire. I just saw one person—he was saying, “I lean on God, the best protector”—they arrested him. Anyone who could carry an injured person did, those who couldn't didn't.

Omar Omran described the police forces taking control of the area and the protestors leaving:

“

At about 5 pm or a little past, we heard the sound of armored vehicles very close by and knew that they had entered the square and were next to us. The armored vehicle then approached the tent we were in. Those who were conscious ran out. I saw that machine gun barrels were poking out of the armored vehicle, and I ran toward the hospital. People warned me to hide because they were killing people. We crawled to

the hospital door and entered. The door to the hospital is glass and we didn't know where to hide from the gunfire. Bullets began to pierce the glass and enter the hospital. We all lay on the ground, which was filled with the blood of martyrs. We stayed down and then went to the hospital basement. There were women and children. We were about 200 people. We thought we might suffocate from the tear gas and had to get out. Suddenly there was a terrible sound—the hospital glass door shattered and we knew they'd entered. I was on the stairs between the basement and the floor above, and there were people ahead of me. Three of them went upstairs and then we heard gunfire. The guy on the stairs ahead of me told us to go back because they'd killed them. We went back down to the basement and in a bit heard a person calling out telling us we had five minutes to leave the hospital. He kept repeating it and so we came out from below. While we were leaving I saw huge police officers with weapons I'd never seen before, automatic weapons, very advanced. They were so big it was like they were two weapons put together. One of the officers hit someone on the head with the butt of his weapon and told him, "Get out, you terrorists, you Syria lovers." ...When we left the hospital, there were officers and soldiers gesturing us to the exit route. There was a woman wearing a cloak, about 40 years old, dead, just lying on the ground killed, and people were stepping on her by accident because of the fear. Some people tried to prop her on her side, but then just left her. We just wanted to put her on her side instead of leaving her splayed out in the street...I left and saw security in the square, in control of every inch. Security was surrounding the building under construction. I saw a friend of mine who was at that building and told me that the building is what stopped them from entering the square because that there was gunfire coming from inside.

Omran's account matches that of journalists Maged Atef and Alaa al-Qamhawi, who took the opposite way out, which leads to Salah Salem. Atef described the scene saying it was under control and none of the protestors exiting were accosted, with the exception of citizens on Salah Salem itself, who were subjected to verbal harassment.

But journalist Ibrahim al-Masri, who was taking part in the sit-in, said he saw rows of detainees when leaving at about the same time. He thinks they were protestors who tried to leave before

the dispersal was completed and a safe exit was provided for hundreds:

“

There were detainees in lines. I saw that at about 6 pm. I also saw two guys I know from the al-Jazeera crew. They were being arrested by the army, who were slapping and kicking them. They made them lay on the ground, but they were released that night.

Interior Minister Mohamed Ibrahim held a press conference the night of 14 August and said that the following items were seized from the Rabaa sit-in: “nine automatic weapons, one pistol, five locally made pistols, large quantities of ammunition, quantities of bulletproof vests, bladed weapons, and riot gear. The area and surrounding buildings were combed.”⁴⁴ He also stated that 43 policemen had been killed in various clashes around the country that day, adding that the number of civilian casualties killed in various places had reached 149. This number increased substantially in the weeks and months that followed after more bodies were included in the tally.

44- The semi-official al-Ahram newspaper portal on the night of 14 August 2013, <http://gate.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent-Print/4/6/383155.aspx>, accessed on 16 June 2014

Dispersal of the Nahda sit-in

On 14 August 2013, joint army and Interior Ministry forces cleared a sit-in by supporters of the deposed president in Nahda Square, which extended to the main gate of Cairo University and the entrance to the Faculty of Applied Arts. According to a statement made by the official spokesman for the Health Ministry, Mohamed Fathallah, to Reuters, the dispersal of the sit-in left 87 people dead.⁴⁵ One source in the Paramedics Agency told EIPR researchers that 65 ambulances transported 147 injured persons and 21 deceased persons; they were taken to the Umm al-Masriyin Hospital, al-Agouza Hospital, and the Agouza Police Hospital.

According to testimonies collected by EIPR researchers and video footage posted online, the dispersal of the sit-in began at about 7 am and took less than two hours due to the relatively small size of the sit-in compared to Rabaa. One witness said:

“

A half hour after the dawn prayer, we heard that something was going to happen that day [Wednesday, 14 August], so people didn't sleep after the prayer like they normally did. Actually, I won't lie, we didn't take it seriously because they had been saying for days that they would disperse it and they hadn't. But the people standing at the security gates were at the ready. At about 6 or 6:30 am, the stage started operating, people saying, "God is great" as if it were the holiday and waking people up who had gone to sleep after the dawn prayer. The dispersal started at about 7.

The dispersal began as heavy tear gas was fired and army bulldozers stormed the two entrances toward the Cairo University Bridge (Nahda Square) and the Faculty of Applied Arts (Bayn al-Sarayat). Behind the bulldozers were police armored vehicles and CSF soldiers. The witness added:

“

We were surrounded from behind and in front, and the gas masks weren't helping at all. They started to arrest people, nurses and doctors with the field hospital that was next to the wall of the Orman Garden. People ran and we ran behind them inside the Faculty of Engineering. While we trying to run, we were throwing Molotovs, but we couldn't reach the armored vehicles, so we threw them at the remaining tents to give us cover as we entered the college. Helicopters flying overhead were firing tear gas and reporting our movements to the armored vehicles outside the college who

⁴⁵- Reuters, 15 Aug. 2013, <<http://ara.reuters.com/article/topNews/idARACAE9B2HIN20130815>>.

couldn't see us because of the tear gas. We split up inside the college so the helicopter couldn't identify one particular spot.

The sole exit for the protestors was on University Street, which allowed some protestors to escape from security forces.

During the dispersal, security forces arrested several doctors in the field hospital, burned the hospital, and threw tear gas in one of the rooms designated for the wounded. Dr. Ahmed al-Sarwi, one of the doctors at the Nahda field hospital, stated:



The dispersal started at 7 am. We were inside the hospital and there were many cases of asphyxiation. We also received cases injured by live fire and birdshot. They stormed the hospital 45 minutes later. At the time there were 12 serious cases in the hospital, injured with live fire (in the neck, arm, and thigh). There were no gunshot wounds to the head, but there were shotgun injuries in the head and neck. There were only three doctors in the field hospital. Ten minutes before they stormed the field hospital, the hospital was hit with heavy tear gas...Masked policemen entered the field hospital. They looked at us and told us to get out. We told them we had injured people there. They told us to get out or they would fire at us. We told them we had sick people, and they threw two tear gas canisters inside the room (a wooden room measuring 4 by 12 meters). It came right next to me and I saw the fuse. There were four people dying. I came out with two wounded people leaning on me, one of them who had been shot in the neck. Another doctor took two other cases with him. We supported them to the "We're the Students" kiosk, where we began to hook them up to IVs. We asked the police to get an ambulance, but they stood around and put it off. From the field hospital to the University Bridge, the police controlled the whole area, the sit-in was cleared. Even when Dr. Abd al-Rahman al-Shawaf came with his car to carry away a wounded man, he was arrested. All of the doctors at the field hospital were arrested...about 15 doctors...There was Dr. Ahmed Zaki (pharmacist), Dr. Ahmad Shatta (chest), Dr. Dia (eye), Dr. Mahmoud Adel (pediatrician), Dr. Abd al-Rahman al-Shawaf, and Dr. Mahmoud (heart and chest). I left at 10 am...Inside the hospital there were 12–15 people with gunshot wounds, five with birdshot injuries, and dozens of cases of asphyxiation.

Dr. Sarwi's testimony was consistent with that of other protestors, who told EIPR researchers that they saw many people arrested who were treating the injured; they also spoke of the attack on the hospital while there were wounded people inside.

The security forces attacked the architecture building in the Faculty of Engineering, which also held wounded people, according to Hamdi Abd al-Tawwab, a protestor who was inside the building. Abd al-Tawwab said, "They fired gas inside the building so we were forced to move the hospital twice to three different lecture halls." According to testimonies gathered by EIPR researchers from people inside the building, at least four people died inside the Faculty of Engineering.

According to testimonies collected by the EIPR, three people said that they saw several protestors—between 2 and 15, according to statements—inside the Faculty of Engineering trading fire with security forces outside the college walls. Mohamed Fathi, a photographer with al-Masry al-Youm, was present from 7 to 10:30 am and saw the exchange of gunfire between security forces and protestors, but he was unable to see any of them while they were shooting at security forces because the protestors were taking cover inside the college. Fathi saw one CSF soldiers injured when the dispersal began.

In a statement issued at 9am, the Interior Ministry said, "Some armed elements among the protestors at both areas [al-Nahda and Rabaa] opened heavy fire on the forces, leading to the martyrdom of an officer and a soldier and the injury of four officers and five CSF recruits by gunshots. The forces were able to apprehend one of the armed elements in possession of a multi-purpose machine gun and a quantity of live ammunition in Nahda Square, as well as a great many elements who shot at the forces. The forces were able to impose control on Nahda and the surrounding areas are being combed."⁴⁶ In another statement the same day, the ministry said, "All of [its] forces used only tear gas despite the heavy gunfire they faced from elements among the protestors."⁴⁷

The Interior Ministry's statement that it used no weapons contradicts the numerous injuries

46- Official website of the Interior Ministry, statement no. 2, 14 Aug. 2013, 9am <<http://moiegypt.gov.eg/Arabic/Departments+Sites/Media+and+public+Relation/Ministry+Releases/by14082013c.htm>>.

47- Official website of the Interior Ministry, statement no. 3, 14 Aug. 2013, <<http://moiegypt.gov.eg/Arabic/Departments+Sites/Media+and+public+Relation/Ministry+Releases/by14082013d.htm>>.

and deaths in the ranks of the protestors, which totaled 87 killed in Nahda and more than 100 injured. Footage viewed by EIPR researchers shows three protestors injured by gunfire, one of them apparently dying, as well as three burned bodies.

An Interior Ministry statement on the dispersals at Nahda and Rabaa said that protestors were warned against resisting security forces or the dispersal and that an appeal had gone out during the operation saying that “the Interior Ministry urges the protestors at Nahda to leave via the secure exit on University Street toward Giza Square.”⁴⁸ In the background of some video footage, warnings can be heard during the dispersal even as tear gas was heard being fired at the sit-in to disperse the protestors.⁴⁹ Osama Zayed, one of the protestors present during the operation, told EIPR researchers, “The story that the army gave a warning before clearing isn’t true. A half hour after the assault began, an army armored vehicle was giving out a warning but it wasn’t clear and we couldn’t hear it because of what was going on.”

The protestors remaining inside the Faculty of Engineering left at 7:30 pm. According to an official statement from Ali Abd al-Rahman, the Giza governor, there were about 1,000 people, among them women and children; security forces cleared the area of all protestors.⁵⁰

48- Official website of the Interior Ministry, 14 Aug. 2013, <<http://moiegypt.gov.eg/Arabic/Departments+Sites/Media+and+public+Relation/Ministry+Releases/by14082013a.htm>>.

49- <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jiiOiiZAxjI>>.

50- Giza governorate website, 15 Aug. 2013, <<http://www.giza.gov.eg/MainPage/DispNewsG.aspx?ID=1026>>.

Part four: wide-scale sectarian attacks

During President Mohamed Morsi's year in office, increasing appeals to religion heightened political polarization, promoting hate speech, incitement, and threats of violence against Coptic citizens. It also led to attempts to punish Copts for their political actions—namely, taking part in anti-Morsi protests. During the wave of demonstrations and marches that swept the country following Morsi's constitutional declaration of 22 November 2012, statements made by Muslim Brotherhood leaders and state officials suggested there was a war between Islam and secularists and that they were defending Islamic identity in the face of Christians and secularists. They used these justifications to minimize the importance of the demonstrations, the number of participants, and their impact.⁵¹

Khairat al-Shater, the Brotherhood's deputy guide, said in a press conference called by the Sharaiya Body for Rights and Reform, held on 8 December 2012, that 80 percent of the demonstrators protesting Morsi's decisions in front of the Ittihadiya Presidential Palace were Copts. Mohamed al-Beltagi, a leading Brother, said during the million-man demonstration to support legitimacy on 11 December 2012 that "official reports say that the crowds in front of Ittihadiya are 60 percent Copts."⁵² Directing his words to the Church, Sheikh Safwat Hegazi told a crowd in front of Media Production City, "By God I swear, if you conspire and ally yourselves with the old regime supporters to bring down Morsi, that will be another thing altogether. We know that 60 percent of those at the Ittihadiya are Nazarene...I say, you are our brothers in the nation, but there are red lines. Our red line is the legitimacy of President Mohamed Morsi. If someone sprays it with water, we'll spray him with blood."⁵³ This rhetoric was reflected in Morsi's speech of 26 June 2013, only days before his removal, in which he expressed his discomfort with rela-

51- For EIPR's full documentation of sectarian attacks, see <<http://eipr.org/en/pressrelease/2013/08/25/1791>>.

52- For Khairat al-Shater's statement see, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TASWKb-JQfU>; for al-Beltagi's statement, see, <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNtxL2IAN2k>>.

53- <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E-z7FESuwdI>>.

tions with Copts and said that their true feelings were not spoken of in official meetings. Morsi said:

“

The message to our partners in the nation, our Christian brothers, is one of amity and esteem. We are partners in one nation, the children of one nation, one history, and one culture. We are working together to entrench citizenship, that word we have long held to and which has been repeated in official talks, but which we don't feel...I am not comfortable with what I feel are cool relations that cannot be missed behind the smiles and visits and protocols that bring us together, although I appreciate the fears held over from the former regime, which fostered fear of anything Islamic, but it is not so.

In the context of threats made against Christian citizens warning them against taking part in the demonstrations of 30 June, Assem Abd al-Maged, a member of the Shura Council for the Gamaa al-Islamiya, said on the stage at Rabaa al-Adawiya on 29 June:

“

Bearded men and are targeted for death and humiliation. It is a crusade led by extremist Copts against the Islamic project, the idea of liberating Egypt from the Islamic occupation. They have been exposed and revealed. Egypt's Muslims will not allow them to achieve their goal. Then they said that since we can't liberate Egypt from Islam, we'll liberate it from the Islamists and humiliate the Muslims. This is a group of people that will declare our killing lawful in a religious crusader war.⁵⁴

In some governorates, threatening notices were distributed warning Copts about participating in the demonstrations and promising to burn churches and their property. A flyer distributed in the Minya governorate, titled “A message for Christians,” threatened that if there were attacks, Copts' property and their churches would be torched. “If you're going out on 6/30 to set the country on fire with shotguns and Molotovs, know that a liter of gasoline can burn up your gold shops...maybe also houses and churches. If you're not afraid of any of that, be afraid for your children and your home.” The statement was signed by “people concerned for the country.”

54- <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QnUPgtkK5QI>>.

Sectarian attacks after Morsi's removal

Prominent leaders in the legitimacy coalition supporting Morsi increased their incitement against the Christian church and spiritual leaders after the armed forces deposed Morsi on 3 July. This was followed by rampant hate speech on a local level. During marches in several governorates, Morsi supporters scrawled anti-Christian graffiti on church walls and Coptic homes and property. There were also attacks on Christian religious institutions and Coptic property in several governorates, especially Minya.

The dispersal of the sit-ins at Rabaa and Nahda on 14 August, 2013 set off an unprecedented wave of sectarian violence and reprisals against Copts in numerous governorates. The attacks typically began when pro-Morsi marchers headed to churches or Coptic-owned property and ended with the torching, looting, or vandalizing of these properties. The attacks were largely carried out in the total absence of security forces, firefighters or civil defense, or army personnel. In some cases, Muslim citizens and Copts themselves held back the attacks by forming popular committees to protect churches.

Citizens were targeted for various types of ill treatment based on their religious identity, including detention, physical harm, abduction, and even murder. According to incidents documented by the EIPR, the six weeks following Morsi's ouster and up to the day the Rabaa sit-in was dispersed saw 10 deaths, among them 9 Copts and one Muslim. The Muslim casualty had attacked Coptic homes in Dilga, located in the Minya governorate, during pro-Morsi demonstrations, when a building belonging to the Catholic church and Coptic homes were attacked. The 9 Copts were killed in several governorates: four were killed in sectarian attacks in Nagaa Hassan, Luxor governorate; two in North Sinai, one of them a Christian cleric and the other a shop owner whose body was found after he had been abducted; one in each of the governorates of Minya, Sohag, and Cairo.

The events in Nagaa Hassan are a good illustration of the pattern of sectarian attacks set off by the dispersal of the Rabaa and Nahda sit-ins. On 4 July 2013, a Christian citizen was accused of killing a Muslim in a purely criminal act, but after the incident, local Copts were subjected to collective punishment for their high rates of participation in the Luxor demonstrations of 30 June. In his testimony, Habib Noshy Habib, who lost two of his brothers in the violence, said:



The events happened on Thursday at 2 or 3 [Friday dawn]. A group saw Magdi Eskandar and his cousin Shenouda and told Magdi, “You’re the one who killed him.” They grabbed Shenouda, tied him up, and threw him in the river, then beat Magdi and left him. At about 5, they reached Emile’s house and were banging on the door. They set the window on fire, but we wouldn’t open. Then things calmed down a bit. At 10 am on Friday, they started breaking down the door and yelling, “We want Emile! If you don’t open up, you’re just going to die.” After that, things calmed down a bit. Emile went to hide at our house—our houses are next to each other. At 1 pm after the Friday prayer, they broke into Rassem’s house and smashed it up. Rassem and Emile came over to our place. At about 7 pm, they gathered and went to Emile’s house and set it on fire. When the government came, we let them in and they told us they were only taking the women, so we went and dressed in women’s clothes. When the police recognized each of us, they would say, “You’re a man, stand aside.” It was me, Muharib, Romani, Emile, Rassem and Milad. After the government took the women out, they let the crowd in. When I saw the door open, I ran for the bathroom and jumped into the building’s airshaft. I hid there in the dark and heard them say, “There is no god but God,” and I heard slamming and things breaking. I knew them from their voices. It was Mustafa and the rest were Hussein al-Shater, Mohamed Abu Kardisi, and Ali Fouad Ghafir, who works here too. There was also a man named Gabalawi, who works as a junior policeman. All of them came in and broke things. I heard the sound of a police car outside and I heard one of them say, “Come on, finish up. We let you in, so finish up.” The officer came in and looked around to see if they were done yet. The officer was wearing an investigator’s uniform, I think. There was a fat officer with them, he was one of the ones who would not take us out of there. After they were done and they’d finished with the group that was attacking us, he went and got a flashlight and shined it in the airshaft. He saw me. The airshaft I was in opened onto the stairwell. He was trying to pull me in and I grabbed him and told him, either we die together or live together. There was an elderly officer standing at the armored vehicle, he saw me and came toward me, saying “Bring him here.” He made the soldiers encircle the armored vehicle and stop the people from attacking me. There were lots of people, all from the town. They

opened up the armored vehicle to me and told the soldiers to see where I wanted to go. They took me to the church.

When discussing the events in East Bani Ahmed on 3 August 2013, Gamal al-Din al-Hilali, the secretary of the Construction and Development Party in Minya, the political arm of the Gamaa al-Islamiya, spoke of the climate of sectarian incitement that followed Morsi's removal and how many Islamist spiritual and political leaders attempted to contain it:



There have been disputes in the village for 15 days. The Christians took part in the events of 30 June, and there were some quick skirmishes with Muslims and then it passed. Actually, there is bitterness. In some villages there were attacks. We're trying to calm things down, but the bitterness and tension is there in people's hearts. People here saw the Nazarenes get together six minibuses of people to take part in the demonstrations in Minya. That had an emotional effect on Muslims. They're saying that the Nazarenes are the basis of the strife.

Some of the brethren informed me that there was a dispute between Muslims and Christians in East Beni Ahmed. I went with Sheikh Ragab Hassan and other sheikhs at about 11 pm. We had heard the rumor that the village mosque was torched and two Muslims were killed. We ascertained that the news was incorrect, that the mosque did not burn and that the church was fine and undamaged. We began persuading youth from the neighboring villages to go home, telling them that it was just a rumor. One group was unconvinced and we took them to the mosque to see that it was fine. We convinced the people from West Beni Ahmed that the mosque was secure and that we were certain that security would intervene if there were any assault on it. At that time, security had set up a barrier to separate East Beni Ahmed from West Beni Ahmed. We asked that people be allowed to cross it to return to their village. When the rumors spread, the mob took control of the situation. Security dealt with the events with professionalism. If they had arrested anyone, things would've escalated. Security was happy when they saw us resolving the problem. We managed to get people from other villages out, and Islamists worked to calm the zealous crowds.

The day the two sit-ins were cleared, five citizens were killed, three of them in Minya governorate. Ehab Ahmed and Bishoi Mikhail were burned to death on a tourist boat set on fire by supporters of the deposed president on the afternoon of 14 August; Eskander Tous was killed, his body mutilated, and he was buried without ceremony in Dilga the same day after his home was stormed. In Alexandria, demonstrators stopped Mina Raafat and, identifying him by the cross tattooed on his hand, they killed him. Fawzi Murid was killed in his shop by pro-Morsi demonstrators in the Ezbat al-Nakhl area of Cairo before Muslims and Copts stopped the mob from reaching the nearby church. The fact that churches have been evacuated of worshippers and clergy in preparation for possible reprisals prevented a catastrophic death toll.

The EIPR does not have a specific count of persons injured and detained during the wave of attacks on Copts, but many statements from victims, their families, and eyewitnesses confirmed that numerous Copts were terrorized, detained in their homes, and abducted during the assaults. Some were injured with firearms, shotguns, and bladed weapons during attacks on churches, and some Christian clerics were locked up in churches or their homes. Some were able to escape to the homes of Muslim neighbors who helped them to flee and escape the scene of the attacks.

Churches and religious facilities targeted

The EIPR documented various attacks on 43 churches, including 27 churches that were looted and entirely or mostly burned to the ground. Some 13 churches were looted and had their doors and windows partially destroyed, while three churches came under gunfire. The attacks also struck seven schools and six Christian associations, including two medical centers and an orphanage. In addition, seven church service buildings were burned and the homes of ten Christian clerics were attacked.

Governorates in Upper Egypt were the main theater for these types of attacks, especially Minya, where ten churches were torched; five churches were burned in Fayyoub, four in Assyout, three in Suez, and two in Giza. Most of these churches were set on fire by marchers supporting the deposed president, and some of the marches set out from sit-ins, as in cities in Minya, Assyout, and Sohag. In other cases, such as in cities and districts in Fayyoub, Minya, and Giza, appeals went out to attack churches from mosques known to be dominated by Islamist currents. In most cases, church crosses would be broken, tied to cars, and dragged through the streets. Some of the churches that were destroyed were more than a century old.

Father Abram Tannas, the priest at the Church of the Virgin and Father Abram in Dilga, gave a statement regarding the storming and burning of the Mar Girgis Church:



The events began a week after Wednesday. At 8:00 they came. Every so often another group would come to help destroy it. Of course, we called security more than once. So far, no one's come...This monastery is comprised of three churches: the underground ancient Church of the Virgin, dating to the fourth century, and the Father Burham Church, because Father Burham was from Dilga so we built him a big church in Sadat's time, maybe in 1975. What you saw and what was destroyed was the Mar Girgis Church. It's also ancient. It has monks' cells and the lending library, part of the audio library that sells tapes and things like that. It has a cyber café, made up of 15 to 20 computers. Of course, it was they were all wiped clean and after that, they set fire to them. There's an old guesthouse—the buildings were so lovely. They took it apart, as you saw when you entered. All the doors and window in the rooms were taken of course, everything was taken. There was a [electrical] cable below the church that fed the entire church. We bought it four or five years ago for LE30,000. They dug it up and took it...There was a group of Muslims that defended it three times, and no one touched it from 30 June. But when those huge numbers came—maybe more than 10,000—they entered the church.

Hegumen Ibrahim Adli Khalil, the priest of the Mar Girgis Church in Minya and the president of the Christian Soldiers Orphans Association in Minya, related a similar story of assaults by large marches chanting pro-Morsi slogans; he, too, said the security response was too late or absent altogether:



What happened is that this place is part of the association. It's next to Balas Square, the main square in Minya and the site of the sit-in. They had closed the street at the door of the association. Of course every day there were chants and shooting in the air. We were afraid for the kids who were at the association, so we turned them over to their families temporarily until the end of the events. We thank God that at the time of the attack on the association there wasn't one child in the association...Of course, the demonstrations had huge numbers of people. It's like no one knew anyone. The people would march in demonstrations without thinking, destroy things

without thinking...What happened is that on Wednesday, 12 August, the day they cleared the Nahda and Rabaa sit-ins, a huge group of terrorists came and attacked the place here. As you can see, the building here was burned to the ground with everything inside it, after they took whatever they could carry. It was an organized operation, first looting and theft then burn it down. The same thing happened at the association's housewares shop, the same thing. The goods there and in the storage space were looted and then the center and the storage space were torched. The fire reached the second floor to the reception hall. From the heat of the fire, the windows in the hall burst and the air-conditioners were burned. The chairs in the hall were also burned. There is a services building attached to the association, an eight-story building, it was just built. They entered and destroyed everything in it, from the elevator door and the elevator itself, which they threw into the stairwell. On all the floors, the refrigerators, stoves, washing machines, fans, air-conditioners, video player, the projector, and the kids' beds and mattresses were all burned, along with the desks and hot water heaters. Three medium-sized metal safes owned by the association were stolen. Of course, they broke the glass windows and doors. They left nothing. It's an eight-story building, but they left nothing, not even one room, without destroying it. The losses to the association here are at least LE3 million.

Attacks on private property and forced expulsions

Hundreds of homes, shops, and businesses owned by Copts were looted, destroyed, and burned. According to testimonies obtained by the EIPR, some shops were marked with a distinctive sign and the owners received threats that they would be torched. After Morsi was deposed, marches of his supporters, especially in the Minya and Sohag governorates, headed to Coptic-majority villages and city streets, chanting anti-Christian slogans, harassing Copts, and attacking their property.

Amir Nasrallah Bedeir gave his account of sectarian attacks, which is typical of many of the attacks that occurred in the days after Mohamed Morsi was deposed:



What happened is that after they fought on the main street, they came here. They brought jerrycans of gasoline and Molotovs and started throwing them. That door leads to the house inside, so I took cover behind it. There was a colleague of mine

with them and I asked him what they thought they were doing. He told me, “We’ll show you, we’ll teach you a lesson.” His name is Abduh Mohamed Abd al-Razeq. This was the shop, for construction materials. I had cement there, plaster, all kinds of cement, and that was a whole shelf of paints and iron, that was a whole shelf—look, you can still see the traces of the wood, everything fell. That was for electrical stuff, plumbing there. If we search these things here [pointing at ground], we’ll find everything I’ve told you about. Some of the things weren’t touched by the fire. Of course, I was standing here while they threw bottles and things. The shop caught on fire of course. It’s two floors. The first floor is here. There are still some remnants on the second floor. There were so many people so I went upstairs, I thought I’d throw some dirt or anything at them. They shot at me and I couldn’t do anything. They gathered at the gate there because they wanted to break into the church. I was busy trying to keep the gate closed, and this is how it turned out. There was paint thinner, gas, and paint lacquers here of course. There were so many goods, so much money spent on them, because I’d just opened. It had only been a couple of months. I’ve got lots of debt because I paid on installment. So that’s what happened. Everything went up in flames. They wanted to enter here and I came to stop them, but then I ran when they told me the church was going to burn. I left here and went to the church. We stood behind the gate. One of them hit me on the side with a stick, and we ran and went to the church from inside. We broke the window, and I ran after someone. I was the first person who reached the church. I ran after someone and he cursed me. When I couldn’t catch him, he hit me with something, but thank God, it didn’t hurt me.

For several days after the dispersal of the sit-ins, Copt-owned property was targeted directly in various ways. Homes were surrounded and their inhabitants terrorized; the doors, windows, and crosses on the front were smashed. Shops were looted and what could not be carried off was destroyed and burned. Fire trucks were prevented from entering to put out the flames. Copts were forced to pay protection money against attacks, while their homes were appropriated, the owners expelled, and the names of Muslims inscribed as the new owners, as was the case in the village of Dilga in the Minya governorate. In Minya in particular, in the villages of Dilga and Maghagha, Copts were expelled from town.

Closing comment

The various types of violations reviewed by this report over the three stages under consideration reveal several structural failings in the operation of numerous official institutions, particularly the security and military establishments. These shortcomings were a primary reason the violations intensified or were not contained to prevent their escalation and spread. These failings should have been rapidly addressed with comprehensive institutional reform programs by either the transitional administration or the first elected civilian government, but were not.

In this final section, we shall review the steps the security apparatus should have taken to limit these widespread violations, taking as a guideline international human rights principles accepted by successive Egyptian governments and best practices in democratic systems. We will also attempt to identify the basic features of the necessary reforms in light of the same principles. In particular, the largest part will be devoted to reviewing the obligations of the security forces in dealing with sit-ins, demonstrations, and other forms of peaceful assembly, civil disorder, or instances of civil conflict, since this apparatus is the principal law-enforcement body and because it bears the greatest responsibility for the loss of life in the violence discussed in this report. We will refer to the dispersal of the two sit-ins at Rabaa al-Adawiya and al-Nahda Square as examples since they were the two most lethal incidents discussed in the report.

Security forces and policing rules

Security forces should have observed two main principles when clearing the sit-ins at Rabaa and al-Nahda: proportionality and good administration. One of the most important rules of good administration in dealing with assemblies and public disorder is that in the event that the decision is made to use force or repression mechanisms, governments must devise a set of possible responses for more than one scenario and devise an appropriate, proportional approach for each scenario. Judging by the events detailed in this report, it does not appear that the security forces planned well for the possibility that demonstrators might resist the dispersal with firearms. And this is with the knowledge that the protestors showed no intention of clearing the sit-in for a long period prior to the dispersal, when it was intimated on more than one occasion that the sit-

in might be cleared with force. Moreover, clashes with much smaller numbers of protestors over the month of July had already led to the deaths of 150 demonstrators and at least four security personnel. This obligated the government to devise a well-thought out plan to minimize the likelihood of a high death toll. Available testimonies and evidence and Interior Ministry statements on the weapons found inside the Rabaa sit-in suggest that only a handful of individuals among the thousands of protestors used firearms.⁵⁵ In response, police forces fired live ammunition indiscriminately toward protestors for several hours, killing many unarmed protestors who were far from the location of the armed elements, as evidenced by various testimonies and the statements of protestors themselves, who said that the armed elements were limited to some rooms in the reception hall and the unfinished building overlooking Tayaran Street, known as the Manayfa building.

This raises several questions: did the Interior Ministry plan for a situation in which it exchanged fire with armed elements while attempting to protect other demonstrators or unarmed persons at the site? This was its duty as the institution tasked with law enforcement, even if it sought to arrest and question other demonstrators. Did the Interior Ministry plan for a scenario in which it traded fire with armed individuals in a location separated by an open space in which dozens, or perhaps hundreds, of unarmed citizens were trapped, unable to flee or unwilling to flee fearing arrest or abuse by local residents occupying the neighboring streets? It was well known that a great many area residents were angry about the sit-in and had attempted to accost demonstrators, but the responsibility for securing open, safe exits for peaceful protestors fell largely to the army and police forces. Why did the police and army not genuinely secure exits and why did they not try to prevent local residents from harassing and physically assaulting protestors at Rabaa al-Adawiya, as documented in testimonies? Why did they not surround the sit-in and bar entry and exit prior to the dispersal, as had been stated on more than one previous occasion?

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has set forth a set of principles to regulate the right of peaceful assembly in democratic societies.⁵⁶ The principles offer a precise definition of violent demonstration, noting that “an individual does not cease to enjoy the right

55- Video footage of the interior minister press conference on the number of dead and wounded following the clearing of the sit-in, part one, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jhat2-NSeD4>>.

56- Guidelines on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly, OSCE, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. <http://www.osce.org/baku/105947>

to peaceful assembly as a result of sporadic violence or other punishable acts committed by others in the course of the demonstration, if the individual in question remains peaceful in his or her own intentions or behavior.”⁵⁷ While the law gives the authorities the right to effect various forms of intervention if violence is used, the definition or interpretation of violent conduct must be narrowly construed as certain degrees of physical violence. In some exceptional moments, this definition may be expanded beyond physical violence to include other forms of willful intimidation or harassment or actions falling in the scope of cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment causing psychological harm or pain.

Comparing this description with the shape of the sit-in in its final days, it appears that the Rabaa al-Adawiya sit-in failed to pass the above mentioned test. We cannot deny the existence of cases of violence, and certainly a number of protestors used firearms. Government bodies would therefore naturally deal with the assembly as an unlawful sit-in and would not tolerate its development in this direction. But the number of cases, based on witness testimonies and Interior Ministry statements on the weapons found in the sit-in, did not justify suspending the rights of the overwhelming majority of protestors who did not use firearms. None of this justified violating protestors’ right to life, which can only be breached in the event of an imminent threat to the lives of civilians or policemen, a basic rule of police work.⁵⁸ Even granting the difficulty of complying with these restrictions and standards during the Rabaa and Nahda dispersals due to the poor training, incompetence, and lack of professionalism of the Egyptian police, it remains difficult to accept that the police were unable to undertake the operation without incurring so many casualties, which was described by rights organizations as constituting wide-scale collective punishment.⁵⁹ Police forces must deploy lethal force as necessary only in the most exceptional cases; the use of birdshot or live ammunition by a small number of protestors cannot justify such a high number of casualties.

The right to life is not suspended simply by dint of being present in a place in which others are deploying some form of violence or attacking citizens or security forces. Law-enforcement

57- Ibid, page 33, paragraph 26

58- Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, issued by the UN in 1990. See also Amnesty International’s 2007 guide, “Understanding Policing”

59- EIPR and other organizations, “Egypt: No Acknowledgement or Justice for Mass Protestor Killings,” 10 Dec. 2013, <http://eipr.org/en/pressrelease/2013/12/10/1895>

agencies have the right to use lethal force only in the event of a threat of death or severe injury issuing from a particular person or group. Law-enforcement personnel may not generalize this threat to all persons found in the area or the demonstration at the time.

An attempt to identify the major problems and crimes committed by police during the dispersal of the Rabaa sit-in, taking into consideration the context in which they were operating, yields the following:

1. The use of lethal force in the absence of absolute necessity or an imminent threat to life: it cannot be denied that at more than one instance, there were threats to life issuing from inside the sit-in, and there is strong evidence that a number of protestors used firearms, including automatic weapons, to confront the dispersal. But, as clearly illustrated by testimonies, it also cannot be denied that police forces targeted persons—perhaps the greater share of the dead—who constituted no threat and were unarmed or, in fact, running away from them. This is true even considering the limited police abilities and that CSF could not isolate armed protestors from those around them. In this case, there were clear areas from which the shooting came, based on unanimous witness statements and video footage: the building under construction overlooking Tayaran Street and, to a lesser degree, a high point inside the Rabaa al-Adawiya mosque complex. Even recognizing the poor abilities of CSF and special operations forces—which ostensibly receive high-level training—there is absolutely no justification for targeting persons on in the middle of the street at Rabaa or those attempting to rescue or aid others.

2. The testimonies of the vast majority of journalists, doctors, and other witnesses, as well as the observations of EIPR researchers and an examination of the bodies on 15 August, indicate that the overwhelming majority of injuries were in the head and chest, a much higher rate of upper-body injuries than the norm.

Certain conditions may justify lawful killing by police, but first and foremost an imminent threat to live or threat of serious injury must exist as a condition for the use of live ammunition. Police forces around the world maintain different standards for the decision to use live ammunition, and there is some flexibility in international rules. If a person is armed and constitutes an imminent danger to life, some police forces permit aiming for the chest despite the high likelihood of death because aiming at the legs is not easy or feasible in most cases, contrary to popular

belief; indeed, it may result in a stray shot that injures others. Nevertheless, a step of this gravity is not taken until it is ascertained that the person to be isolated, detained, or injured constitutes a genuine threat. Police forces thus train personnel to aim for the chest area when using lethal force. This is done in extremely exceptional cases; aiming for the head is unnecessary in all cases and also not easy. Exceptional circumstances, defined as the existence of an imminent threat to life, did not obtain in most of the cases described in this report. In fact, in more than one case, police appear to have targeted any person present in the line of fire, even if he was trying to escape. In such cases, targeting the head and chest is closer to an act of murder committed on a very large scale.

As for the issue of the buildings and bodies burned as a result of police conduct, several testimonies indicate that the protestors lit heavy fire using car tires, which managed to slow the police advance for some time. At least one witness said that he saw the explosion of a butane canister that protestors had used with other items to construct barriers against police forces; a bulldozer hit the canister, causing it to explode and killing a demonstrator standing nearby. This may be the most likely explanation for the several burnt bodies, as there is no evidence for the story circulated by some that security forces intentionally burned bodies when clearing the sit-in.

Police Units responsible for engaging with assemblies and public disorder⁶⁰

Riot control units and combat forces that are at times sent to support anti-riot forces are subordinate to the Central Security Forces (CSF) in the Interior Ministry, which is headed by the assistant interior minister for the CSF sector. Security forces⁶¹ led by the assistant interior minister for the security forces sector and attached to security directorate around the country also support the CSF in engaging with public disorder.

The CSF sector comprises several operational units: riot control units, security and guard units, combat support squadrons, and special operations. Riot control units are armed with a mix of less lethal police weapons and protective gear, as well as a small number of combat arms. Riot control formations include varying numbers of plastic or bamboo batons, 12-gauge shotguns,

60- For CSF armament decrees, see <http://eipr.org/sites/default/files/pressreleases/pdf/decrees_governing_weapons.pdf>.

61- Security Forces and Central Security Forces are two different bodies within the interior ministry with overlapping responsibilities.

shotguns outfitted with tear gas launcher cups, and 1.5-inch tear gas guns. Each formation is also equipped with at least one 7.62 x 39 mm automatic rifle. Armament Decree 3/2007 states that squadrons for clearing armed riots should be outfitted with more lethal weapons, specifically automatic rifles, light machine guns or assault rifles, submachine guns for officers, and a greater number of 1.5-inch tear gas guns.

Security and guard squadrons are equipped largely with combat weapons (automatic rifles and 7.62 x 39 mm light machine guns). These are followed by the support squadrons, which are heavily armed. According to the aforementioned decree, they are equipped with 9 mm machine guns, night and daytime sniper rifles, 7.62 x 39 mm automatic rifles, 7.62 x 54 mm medium machine guns, 7.62 x 51 mm multi-purpose machine guns, semi-automatic assault shotguns, 40 mm grenade launchers, defensive hand grenades, and 1.5-inch tear gas guns. Armored vehicles attached to support squadrons are mounted with 12.7 x 99 mm machine guns.

The special operations administration includes external service units (tasked largely with securing embassies and important figures or facilities) are heavily armed (including with 7.62 x 39 mm automatic rifles, sniper rifles, light and medium machine guns, and 12.7 x 99 mm Browning machine guns mounted on armored vehicles). Below these units are anti-riot units and combat units, armed similarly to riot control units with 7.62 x 39 mm automatic weapons, gas guns and shotguns, but with more automatic rifles for the combat units.

In normal circumstances, assemblies, demonstrations, and public disorder are assigned to CSF anti-riot units and security forces subordinate administratively to security directorates, as well as personnel from the Public Security Services, criminal investigations directorates, and the security directorate or police stations in whose jurisdictions the incident occurs. This is true for any sort of assembly, even those that are small, entirely peaceful, and carry no threat of violence. Nevertheless, based on the experience of the past few years, in the event of large demonstrations or major disorder, or events that threaten to turn to large-scale violence or require greater numbers to disperse, the Interior Ministry dispatches support squadrons or special forces to engage with demonstrators. This is apparent in the type of arms in evidence and the more intensive use of lethal force, as was clear on 28 January 2011 and confirmed by the prosecution's investigations. In these cases as well, plans for engaging the assembly are drafted jointly between the specialized sectors and the regional, geography-based directorates.

On 14 August 2013, military forces were also present in the vicinity of Rabaa al-Adawiya, but they did no more than close entrances and traffic routes and did not join police forces in the dispersal. Police forces on the scene appeared to include more than one CSF unit, and they exhibited more combat readiness than the typically armed riot control forces.

A review of the reports from the Public Prosecution in the case of the killing of demonstrators by Hosni Mubarak, Interior Minister Habib al-Adli, and six of al-Adli's deputies shows that operations were coordinated between the minister and his deputies in charge of CSF, Security Forces, the Public Security Services, State Security (currently Homeland Security), as well as the geography-based sectors (security directors in Cairo, Giza, Alexandria, and deputy ministers for other areas), regional CSF directors (for example the Cairo CSF director), and the operations director of CSF. Any investigations into the circumstances of the dispersal of the sit-ins must include all of these directorates and persons, as well as criminal investigations officers in the Cairo and Giza security directorates and the police stations in the vicinity of the clashes.

Responsibility of security forces during sectarian attacks

The performance of the security apparatus during the wave of attacks on Coptic citizens and churches that followed the protests of 30 June was characterized by sluggishness and inaction, an approach held over from the Mubarak era. The security apparatus failed to intervene pro-actively to prevent operations revent attacks, despite various indications of sectarian tension and the spread of incitement against Copts among Islamists and their supporters. Security then failed to intervene rapidly to prevent the events from escalating and they were slow to respond to appeals for help from citizens, despite having stressed from the beginning of the current political crisis their commitment to protect national unity and stand up to any sectarian violence.

Recommendations

The EIPR realizes that the following recommendations focus on technical and legal policies and that their adoption and implementation may require far-reaching changes and reform of the political system and the scope of operation of the security apparatus, and a much clearer emphasis on the rule of law and its institutions. We therefore put them before the public for discussion, examination, and revision, for their adoption in whole or in part by state institutions and civil society, including political forces. Only these parties working together are able to institute the changes necessary to bring about security, judicial, and political institutions capable of managing civil conflicts in the most peaceful, salutary way, in which the state exercises a monopoly on violence, not to engage in unlawful, unfair practices, but to ensure that violence is not used to resolve conflicts, win one's rights, or infringe the rights of others.

- Regarding the national independent fact-finding commission investigating the events of the 30 June 2013 revolution and its aftermath:
 - Empower the commission to subpoena all state officials, including officials with the Interior Ministry and armed forces, and require them to appear to give a statement in cases examined by the commission.
 - Grant the commission the right to require both government and private bodies to submit all information, statements, documentation, and evidence pertinent to its assigned tasks.
 - Give the commission the power of summons, search, and seizure while ensuring judicial oversight.
 - Establish instruments to monitor and implement the commission's recommendations after the completion of its work and the submission of its reports, including an instrument to require the judicial authorities to pursue the commission's recommendations regarding possible legal violations.
 - Institute and enforce a clear law for the protection of witnesses, members of the commission, and its evidence.

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- Release the commission's final report to the public.
 - Publish the reports of previous fact-finding commissions.
 - Undertake a broad, independent judicial investigation into violence from the 25 January revolution to the period covered by the current fact-finding commission (showing due regard for the recommendations above, including a law for witness protection and the ability to subpoena state officials and government or private information and evidence).
 - Form an independent committee of security and legal experts and civil society representatives, including political parties, to propose policies, systems, and technical changes in the operation of the police; these proposals should be submitted to the next parliament to be incorporated in a law. The committee's work should include:
 - Amend laws regulating the use of force and firearms by police to bring them into compliance with the international minimum standards and best practices, specifically the police law (Law 109/1971) and Ministerial Decree 156/1964 supplementing Article 102 of Law 109. The changes should include more safeguards for the responsible use of force by police and to protect the right to life. The concepts of necessity, proportionality, and accountability should be incorporated into the police law, all supplementary administrative decrees, and written periodicals distributed to police personnel. The police law should explicitly limit the use of lethal force to situations in which there is a grave threat to life or of serious injury. The sections on the use of force submitted to the parliament by the Police for the People of Egypt initiative in 2012 may be used as a reference for the proposed legislative changes.
 - Amend the police law and ministerial regulations for the armament of the various branches and units of the police to permit parliamentary oversight of weapons purchases and allocations. The Interior Ministry must publish all decrees regulating the arming of the police forces, particularly the Security Forces and the CSF, as well as any amendments made to the latest relevant decree (Ministerial Decree 3/2007).
 - Establish an oversight mechanism independent of the executive to review cases of death or serious injury at the hands of police, whether in detention facilities subordinate to the Interior Ministry or in public places (such as checkpoints, streets and

roads, and any other area not directly under the control of the police), with the aim of promoting accountability and ending unlawful police violence and the excessive use of force and ammunition. The committee must enjoy all investigating powers with the goal of strengthening oversight of police work and avoiding the shortcomings in accountability resulting from the weakness of the Public Prosecution and the Interior Ministry's internal investigating bodies.

- Repeal Law 107/2013 issued by decree of interim President Adli Mansour on 24 November 2013, known as the protest law. The law so circumscribes the definition of peaceful assembly and demonstration that it is practically impossible to organize any form of peaceful protest. It also establishes arbitrary restrictions on the right to assembly and the expression of opinion, and contravenes minimum international standards and provisions of the Egyptian constitution adopted in 2014. It furthermore mandates heavy penalties for simple administrative infractions, such as demonstrating without prior notice, as well as setting forth penalties for crimes unrelated to the exercise of the right to demonstrate, which are already criminalized by the Penal Code.
- Draft appropriate legal changes to address incitement to violence without infringing on the right to the peaceful expression of opinion.

Appendix:

Egypt's obligations under international human rights law

Egypt is obligated to respect the civil and political rights of individuals, including the right to life, freedom of religion and belief, freedom of expression and assembly, and the right to a fair trial pursuant to the provisions of international human rights law and specifically pursuant to its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).⁶² Generally, the ICCPR and other international and regional human rights conventions and treaties impose two types of obligations on state parties: negative and positive. The negative commitment to rights set forth in human rights conventions is the more common, achieved by the state refraining from taking any measures likely to deprive individuals of these rights.

Regarding the right to peaceful assembly, set forth in Article 21 of the ICCPR,⁶³ Egypt has a negative obligation to not interfere in, prohibit, or limit the freedom of peaceful assembly except within the bounds laid out in the article itself. While Article 21 applies to peaceful assembly, human rights courts have ruled that this right is not suspended if some participants in an assembly use violence or the assembly becomes unruly.⁶⁴ Even if the situation requires the state to take some restrictive measures, they must be within the narrowest bounds, set forth in law, necessary in a democratic society, and aim to achieve any of the objectives set forth in Article 21. Generally, when the state takes measures to curb the right of assembly, it must ensure that they are proportionate to the expected benefit to protect the rights of others.

62- Egypt ratified the ICCPR and it became part of domestic law pursuant to Presidential Decree 536/1981, published in the Official Gazette on 15 April 1982.

63- Article 21: "The right of peaceful assembly shall be recognized. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others."

64- *Christians Against Racism and Fascism v. the United Kingdom* (1980) 21 DR 138.

Positive state obligations are of two, interrelated types:

1. The obligation to protect rights, including the protection from rights violations by third parties or non-state parties: this commitment requires the prevention of rights violations by any non-state body or individual and the provision of means of legal redress and restitution in the event of violations.
2. The obligation to promote or realize individual rights by taking the measures necessary to create an appropriate environment for the exercise of these rights: the state must take effective measures to guarantee the exercise of rights. Although this type of obligation is more often referenced in connection with economic, social, and cultural rights, it is also important in realizing civil and political rights.

The right to life

International conventions ratified by Egypt, such as the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights and the ICCPR, recognize the centrality of the right to life. Article 6 of the ICCPR states, “Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.”

Regarding positive obligations pertaining to the right to life, the UN Human Rights Committee—the committee tasked with interpreting the provisions of the ICCPR—has stated in General Comment no. 6, “The expression ‘inherent right to life’ cannot properly be understood in a restrictive manner, and the protection of this right requires that States adopt positive measures... against human rights violators or if possible prevent these violations...in the a legal framework consistent with human rights for all individuals, including suspects and defendants, and not only victims.”⁶⁵

Several international courts, such as the European Court of Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, have clarified in numerous rulings that state respect for the right to life by refraining from direct violation of the right is only part of its responsibility; its responsibilities also include fostering a climate not conducive to violations and securing individuals, if such violations are expected. The responsibility to avoid or prevent infringements of the right

65- Human Rights Committee, sixteenth session, General Comment no. 6, Article 6.

to life is an indivisible part of the state's positive duty to protect its citizens. This logic applies to the right to life as it applies to numerous other rights.

In the case of *Osman v. the United Kingdom*, the European Court of Human Rights held that the state's obligations toward the right to life included instituting effective criminal legal provisions and taking executive and preventive measures necessary to protect the individual's life from the danger of criminal acts by any person, whether a state representative or another citizen.⁶⁶ The court explained that if the state knew or should have known of the existence of a genuine, imminent danger to an individual's life and failed to take reasonable measures to avert the danger, it has thereby breached its positive obligation.

The right to freedom of religion and the protection of religious minorities

In Resolution 40/2005 on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief, the Human Rights Committee required governments to take proactive measures to ensure that individuals belonging to religious minorities were not denied the exercise of their rights, including by taking all appropriate steps in compliance with their international commitments to counter intolerance and violence based on religion or belief, including discriminatory practices and the desecration of religious sites, as well as bringing all rights violators to justice.⁶⁷

International human rights law imposes a negative obligation on the state to not engage in direct infringements of human rights, via police or military forces for example, as well as a positive duty to protect and promote human rights by prosecuting human rights offenders and taking all steps necessary to prevent third parties from violating these rights.

International standards for engaging with demonstration and peaceful or violent assemblies, and rules regulating the use of force by police⁶⁸

State responsibility to protect the right of peaceful assembly and protest is not a point of dispute. International standards, the practices of governments and law-enforcement agencies in

66- European Court of Human Rights, *Osman v. the United Kingdom* (87/1997/871/1083).

67- <<http://www.refworld.org/docid/429c3774.html>>.

68- For rules for peacekeeping during demonstrations and public disorder, see <<http://eipr.org/en/report/2011/12/27/1340>>.

democracies, and precedents set by rulings issued in cases related to the right to peaceful assembly affirm the state's responsibility to protect the right to assembly even in cases in which the assembly obstructs work or ordinary life or impedes the operation of executive or other government bodies.

At the same time, the state possesses discretionary powers that permit it to weigh the rights of demonstrators against the right to citizens who may be harmed by a demonstration that obstructs their lives. Laws, statements, and publications of the UN special rapporteur on the right of peaceful assembly recognize that rights cannot be perfectly balanced and that in some cases, a social group or individuals may be permitted to engage in a practice that infringes on the rights of other citizens. In such cases, the state must attempt to reconcile the two sets of rights. It has the discretionary authority to permit this type of demonstration at a particular time or within a certain timeframe, as well as to contain the demonstration geographically and contain its impact on the rights of other citizens.

The state must always weigh rights prior to making any decision that may restrict citizens' rights, especially if it is likely to endanger their physical safety or lives. Even if the state decides to intervene and end a demonstration that has impeded the rights of other citizens living in the area of the sit-in or demonstration, and resulted in several instances of the unlawful use of force or perhaps weapons, the state must remember that its first responsibility is to preserve social peace and public security and protect citizens' lives, including those of the protestors.

This report covers the period from 30 June to 17 August 2013, which saw the removal of President Mohamed Morsi from office and subsequent violent clashes. The report affirms the state's responsibility for human rights violations in this period—both through its direct participation in abuses and its failure to protect citizens' lives and property in attacks on them by non-state actors—as well as identifying the responsibility of partisan and political groups that were directly involved in violence against citizens' homes and property, or deployed hate speech and incitement to discrimination in their media outlets, or at best proved unable to contain this rhetoric.

The Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR) is an independent Egyptian human rights organization that was established in 2002 to promote and defend the personal rights and freedoms of individuals.