An aerial photograph of a massive crowd gathered in an urban area, likely during the Egyptian Revolution. In the center, a large number of white tents are pitched, forming a central camp. Several banners are visible, including one with the text 'PEOPLE'S REVOLUTION' and another with Arabic script. The background shows city buildings under a clear sky.

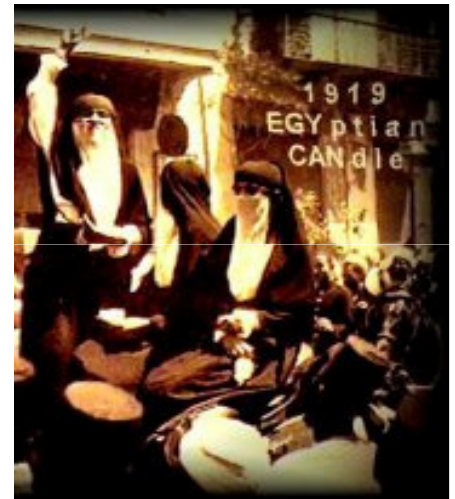
# "HIDDEN SIDE OF THE EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION ; SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN URBAN AREAS & GRASSROOTS ASSOCIATION

AZZA SIRRY, PH.D.  
PROFESSOR OF URBAN PLANNING , HBRG  
, [AZZASIRRY@YAHOO.COM](mailto:AZZASIRRY@YAHOO.COM)



# EGYPTIAN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT MILE STONES

- Women participation in 1919 revolution against the British
- In 1930 the first woman was admitted to the University. The new constitution after 1952 revolution permitted the women to elect and be elected, 4 women were elected in 1957 parliament.
- Year 1962 witnessed the first women to be appointed Minister.
- Family laws that are fair to women 1985-2008
- The Establishment of National council of women in year 2000
- The Egyptian government 2010 mandated the creation of 64 new seats in the house that must go to women(women's quota) .



# BEFORE THE 2011 REVOLUTION /HOSNI MUBARAK ERA

- Quotas for women in parliamentary elections (64 seats) 2010.
- Some laws that deal with violence against women were enacted, criminalize female genital mutilation 2008 .
- The problem of safety of women in urban and rural areas was not addressed. Sexual harassment and assault has been evident for a very long time in Egypt. They took place as far back as 2006, in public transportation, at the metro stations or near the cinemas, specially during (*Eid*) feast celebrations.
- The word "*taharush*", "harassment", was only adopted in the context of sexual assault in the last decade. "Instead, people used to say 'flirtation' *mo'aks*" .
- Enactment of family laws 1985
- Ignorance of the safety of women in public space /and blaming the victim
- No economic empowerment or equity for women
- No official organization that work on the ground –first lady – main actor



## EGYPT FOR ALL EGYPTIANS FOR 18 DAYS



Complete partnership ,  
no sexual harassment





## FIRST TRANSITIONAL / THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE ARMED FORCES PERIOD FEB.2011-JUNE 2012

- Demonstrations celebrating International women's day in March 2011 was attacked in Cairo's Tahrir Square .171 protester in Tahrir were detained of them 17 were women and they were presented to court marshal were they were sentenced to jail .Some protesters undergone **virginity tests**
- The constitutional referendum of 19 March abolished the quota
- **Violence** against women **increased** and gap between law and enforcement especially as the law enforcement in general is weak
- Cultural **stigma against victims-** why are they in the streets & protests



Women's access to information and awareness of their rights, and participation has improved by the 2011 revolution

# PRESIDENT MORSI & MUSLIM BROTHERS PERIOD

- Egyptian women had great worries of the new Islamist constitution. It was approved, in spite of deep disagreement, lowering minimum marriage age for girls to 14 and making it possible to sell girls for sex without getting punished.
- During this period the many amendments to family laws were being proposed
- Women were sexually assaulted or harassed during the Egyptian's protests against the continuing injustice. The assaults are believed to be organized to prevent women from participating in the democratization process
- During this period sexual harassment incidences increased with no governmental reaction



Associations to protect women and help these victims have emerged in Egypt such as Operation Anti Sexual Harassment, a grassroots association set up in November 2012, or Tahrir Bodyguard, a group trying to end all form of sexual harassment.





## SECOND REVOLUTION AND TRANSITIONAL PERIOD

### 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2013 –UNTIL NOW

Again after the first few days of the up rise of 30th June 2013 when women of all social states were participating safely in the protests against Morsi until his ouster. Then again women find themselves witnessing sexual harassment. The new constitution committee of 50 to re write the constitution. Only 5 are women



- The Egyptian community is beginning to be used to seeing women involved in political issues.



# ECRW REPORT - EGYPTIAN WOMEN CONDITIONS 2012

Egypt witnessed sever deterioration on the level of political rights of women retreating to level 125 out of 133 countries all over the world, as clarified in a report by the world economic forum 2012. Egypt also reached level 128 out of 131 countries regarding women presence in the parliaments as the percentage of female parliamentarians in Egypt decreased to 2% in 2011 parliament, after reaching 12.5% in 2010. In what is called "revolution parliament" female members were 5 out of 180 in the Shura (upper chamber ) council, 2.7%.

Since 2011 many associations , organizations , movements and initiatives that deals with women safety , civil rights were created  
Many projects and programs for safer cities for women  
Social media network platforms for exchange of information and helping the victims



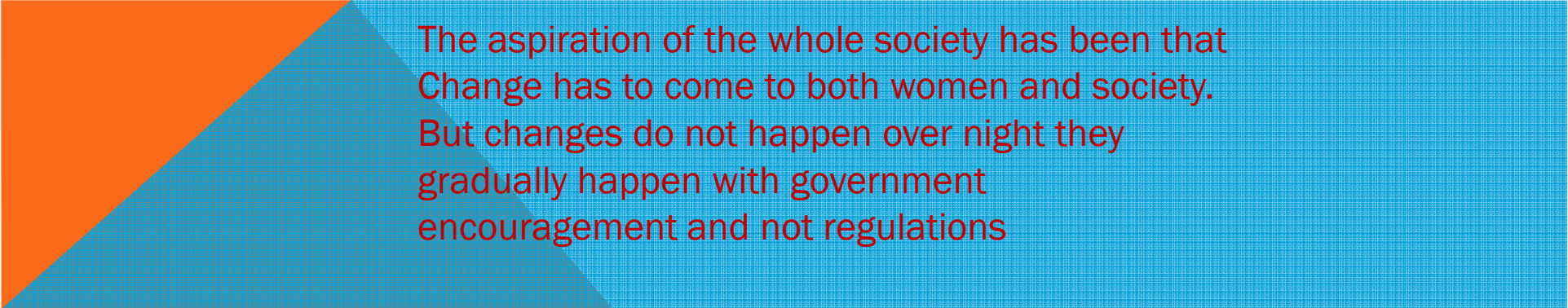


Women who attend protests are often cordoned off into gender-segregated pens for their safety

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2013/08/201381494941573782.html>

# SOLUTION

- Several civil society groups tried to help the victims by patrolling on Tahrir Square. The volunteers encountered though different kinds of harassment themselves. A woman from Operation Anti-Sexual Harassment told the Guardian how she was surrounded by men who were touching and grapping her while she was a part of a rescue team trying to help another woman
- • Egyptian authorities are responsible for investigating incidents of sexual assault and rape and guaranteeing that perpetrators are brought to justice
- • Providing adequate, effective, prompt, and appropriate remedies, including the rehabilitation of survivors; which entails providing psychological care as well as legal and social services , according to international human rights law



The aspiration of the whole society has been that Change has to come to both women and society. But changes do not happen over night they gradually happen with government encouragement and not regulations



# WHAT TO DO FOR POLICY MAKERS AND ACTIVITIES

The women's rights must be treated as a whole .Safety of women is only a part .Equity leads to safety and just cities

To have safe cities for all you must develop

**political & civic rights:** women in parliament, in drafting laws and in Presidential candidates program

**social and economic rights:** education , Job opportunities, health, strategies that deal with violence against women

