

EGYPT

Egypt is a state party to the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its Protocol, but not to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights or its First or Second Optional Protocols. Egypt has no domestic asylum laws and UNHCR determines the refugee status of individual asylum seekers.¹

Egypt hosted more than 55,000 refugees and asylum seekers at the end of 2000², and approximately 75,000 at the end of 2001.³ Asylum seekers who enter without a visa are detained by immigration police and local police or security.⁴ Asylum seekers without residency permits are also detained, but less frequently.⁵

Is there independent review of the detention decision? No.

If the UNHCR becomes aware that an asylum seeker is detained for entry without documentation, she will be interviewed in prison by a UNHCR officer.⁶ If her asylum application is approved, she will be released into UNHCR custody.⁷ If she is rejected, there is no appeal, and the asylum seeker faces deportation or detention as long as she is unable to pay for her return to her home country.⁸

Are there limits on the period of detention? No.

Is there periodic review of detention? No.

Is there access to government-funded legal aid? No.

¹ U.S. COMMITTEE FOR REFUGEES, WORLD REFUGEE SURVEY 2002 at 188 *available at* <http://www.refugees.org/WRS2002>. (Immigration and Refugee Services of America 2002) [hereinafter USCR WORLD REFUGEE SURVEY 2002].

² U.S. COMMITTEE FOR REFUGEES, WORLD REFUGEE SURVEY 2001 at 75 *available at* <http://preview.refuges.org/world/worldmain.htm> (Immigration and Refugee Services of America 2001) [hereinafter USCR WORLD REFUGEE SURVEY 2001].

³ USCR WORLD REFUGEE SURVEY 2002, *supra* note 1, at 54.

⁴ E-mail from Dr. Barbara Harrell-Bond, American University in Cairo, to Jaya Ramji, Debevoise & Plimpton (Jan. 16, 2002) (on file with Debevoise & Plimpton) [hereinafter Amer. Univ. in Cairo Correspondence].

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Id.*

Alternatives to detention: None.

Vulnerable groups: In 2000, women and children were reportedly detained in prison for several months for demonstrating outside of UNHCR's office.⁹

⁹ *Id.*