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## **EGYPT | Renewed Calls for Justice, Equality, Human Rights on Anniversary of Uprising**

On the second anniversary of the Egyptian uprising in Tahrir, Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) continues to call for the equality of citizenship for all Egyptians, regardless of their religion or beliefs.

Two years ago, Egyptians of all creeds and backgrounds joined together to demand equality, justice and the rule of law. In the immediate aftermath of the fall of the Mubarak regime, there was hope for a new Egypt, where the rights of all Egyptians would be respected and upheld.

Repression has continued in the subsequent years with brutal tactics being employed against pro-democracy protestors by the previous military and by the government of President Morsi in order to enforce the status quo, resulting in the loss of many lives. Most recently, seven people died and hundreds were injured during the widespread protests that took place late in 2012 following the negative reaction to the new constitution, which restricts freedom of expression and the rights of women and religious minorities.

In addition, sectarian violence has continued with little or no official intervention. Members of Egypt's Coptic community have been physically attacked or killed. Their homes, businesses and church buildings have been destroyed, and several young women have been abducted.

In a statement issued on the eve of the anniversary, His Grace, Bishop Angaelos, General Bishop of Coptic Orthodox Church in the United Kingdom said, "The uprising in Tahrir Square on Jan. 25 2011 inspired the world as it saw Egyptians standing side-by-side in an effort to reclaim their national identity. There was hope for a new Egypt, one that could offer its people the freedom and responsibility of equal citizenship while no longer focusing on their religious or political stance. It is unfortunate, however, that two years down the line we have not seen sufficient signs of this transformation, and we still witness the marginalization and alienation of many, Christians and Muslims alike, within Egyptian society, while repeatedly witnessing others committing crimes and not being brought to justice." He added, "Considering the significant sacrifice that has been presented over the past two years, even leading to the loss of life, it is time for Egypt to emerge out of the pattern of discriminatory practice, and take on its new identity of a promised democracy that the January 2011 uprising sought to establish."

United Action for Egyptian Copts, a United Kingdom-based Diaspora NGO said, "The Egyptian revolution in 2011 is a dream that has not yet come true. Let us keep dreaming and working

hard towards a truly free and democratic Egypt and have faith that God will deliver Egypt very soon."

CSW's Advocacy Director, Andrew Johnston, said, "The revolution promised to usher in a new era of rights for Egypt's citizens, and there was particularly hope that the rights of religious minorities would improve. However, the past two years have seen increasing restrictions of fundamental freedoms, a marked increase in attacks against Copts, as well as the jailing and harassment of those who have opposed the Morsi government, or who do not share the Muslim Brotherhood's political or religious vision. If the government is truly as democratic as it claims, it should begin to take concrete steps to allow for freedom of expression and to ensure that the rights of all citizens are respected, and that any attacks on individuals or communities are thoroughly investigated."