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EGYPT | CSW Encourages Implementation of Constitutional Human Rights Provisions

As Egyptians prepare to celebrate the third anniversary of the 25 January Revolution, Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) welcomes provisions in the new constitution upholding equal citizenship and international human rights statutes, and encourages their full implementation.

On Jan. 25 2011, protests calling for an end to the 30-year rule of President Hosni Mubarak resulted in his resignation.

The three succeeding years have been marred by repeated cycles of ineffective government, public protest, and institutional violence.

After a brief and violent period under the rule of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), President Morsi was elected in June 2012. After just a year in power, Egyptians took to the streets once again to demand his removal. The scale of these protests eclipsed those against President Mubarak, with 22 million signing a petition calling for his removal from office.

The Egyptian army deposed President Morsi in July 2013, instating a technocrat interim government led by Adly Mansour, President of the Supreme Constitutional Court. Mansour was tasked with implementing a transitional roadmap to the return of civilian rule, beginning with the drafting of and referendum on a new constitution to replace the 2012 constitution drafted by an Islamist-dominated assembly.

Egyptians voted on a new constitution Jan. 14 and 15, 2014, resulting in overwhelming acceptance of the new document. While the new constitution upholds human rights, leans away from a restrictive interpretation of Shari'a, and prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion, belief, gender, or any other criteria, it retains military trials for civilians. It does not subject the military to civilian oversight and religious freedom provisions only apply to Islam, Christianity and Judaism.

CSW's Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas said, "CSW stands with the Egyptian people as they celebrate three years since the Revolution and remember those who sacrificed so much in the pursuit of the aims of the revolution. We welcome the explicit recognition within the new constitution of Egypt's human rights obligations as outlined in international covenants and agreements and look forward to seeing a timely implementation of provisions guaranteeing the rights and privileges of all Egyptians and upholding equality of citizenship."