



**His Excellency, Mr. Clément Nyaletsossi Voule**

Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association

c/o Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Palais des Nations

CH-1211 Geneva 10

Switzerland

**Subject: Violations of the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly in Lebanon, Tunisia, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia**

**Your Excellency,**

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to bring to your attention the grave violations to the right to freedom of peaceful assembly in Lebanon, Tunisia, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. As concerned organizations and advocates for human rights, we urge you to take all necessary actions to address these violations and ensure that these countries respect and protect the fundamental human right to freedom of peaceful assembly.

**In Lebanon,** security personnel have used excessive force to crack down on protesters during peaceful demonstrations. The recent crackdown on protests in Beirut and Tripoli is a clear example of the government's failure to respect the right to peaceful assembly. Security forces have used tear gas, rubber bullets, and live ammunition to disperse protesters, resulting in the deaths of several individuals and injuries to many others. Additionally, On June 24, 2022, Interior Minister Bassam al-Mawlawi sent an urgent letter to the directorates of Internal Security

and General Security instructing them to ban any gatherings aimed at “promoting sexual perversion”.

**In Tunisia**, authorities have also resorted to violence and repression to silence peaceful assembly. Security forces have used tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse demonstrations and have arrested and detained protesters, including many minors, without due process. They also harassed journalists to force them to hand over footage. Moreover, the government has announced a new law that would severely restrict the right to peaceful assembly and expression.

Similarly, **in Egypt**, the government has repeatedly cracked down on peaceful demonstrations and assemblies, often resulting in the arrest, detention, and torture of activists and protesters. Authorities have also enacted legislation that severely restricts the right to peaceful assembly and expression, effectively criminalizing all forms of protest.

**In Saudi Arabia**, it is a crime to participate in peaceful demonstrations or assemblies. The Saudi government prohibits any form of peaceful assembly and continues to issue and carry out death sentences against individuals facing charges, including participation in gatherings and demonstrations that happened years ago.

The public prosecutor demanded the killing of human rights defender Israa Al-Ghomgham on a range of charges, including participation in demonstrations, to retract this later. Al-Ghomgham is currently in prison for 11 years.

Also, despite issuing the associations and civil institutions system, it still refuses to license any human rights organization, between them women rights organizations while it arrests and prosecutes the majority of human rights defenders who sought to establish associations.

These violations of **the right to freedom of peaceful assembly** are unacceptable and must be addressed immediately. As the Special Rapporteur, we ask that you monitor these developments and call for full accountability for human rights violations related to the protest, including through conducting thorough, independent, and transparent investigations into violations and providing victims with access to an effective remedy and redress in **Lebanon**, Tunisia, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. We call on you to conduct thorough investigations into these violations, publicly condemn these violations and to work with governments to develop measures that safeguard the right to peaceful assembly and to respect and protect this fundamental human right.

We trust that you will take prompt and effective action to address these serious violations. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

**Signatories**

ABAAD Resources Centre for Gender Equality  
Alternative Press Syndicate (Nakaba Badila, Lebanon)  
ARTICLE 19  
CIVICUS  
Committee for Justice  
Egyptian Front for Human Rights (EFHR)  
Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor  
European Saudi Organization for Human Rights  
HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement  
Innovation for Change- MENA Hub  
Lebanese Center for Human Rights  
LOUDER  
Media Association for Peace (MAP)  
MENA Rights Group  
The Freedom Initiative