

EGYPT

UNLAWFUL KILLINGS IN
PROTESTS AND POLITICAL
VIOLENCE ON 5 AND 8
JULY 2013

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



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INTRODUCTION

“I did not know what to do and where to take the children... I couldn't go back to the tents because we would suffocate [from tear gas], and I didn't know where to run because of the shooting...”

Woman protester interviewed in Cairo by Amnesty International on 8 July

On 3 July 2013, following vast and mounting protests against President Mohamed Morsi, General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, Minister of Defence, announced the ousting of President Mohamed Morsi, a leading member of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) until he took office after elections a year earlier. Two days later, rival marches and protests in support of and against the deposed President led to widespread violence across Egypt. Eighty-eight people have been killed since Friday 5 July, including some apparently as the result of excessive and unnecessary force by the security forces. Security forces intervened too late or not at all during clashes between supporters and opponents of Mohamed Morsi. Amnesty International's fact-finding team in Cairo were able to collect substantial evidence at the scene of some incidents and at hospitals and morgues as streams of casualties arrived.

Tensions continued to mount and on 8 July a particularly lethal outbreak of violence erupted in Cairo at a protest by supporters of Mohamed Morsi at the Republican Guard Club, a division of the armed forces. At least 54 people were killed, including three members of the security forces. Evidence gathered by Amnesty International at the scene strongly indicates that the security forces used excessive force against pro-Morsi protesters, including intentional lethal force against people who were posing no risk to the lives of security forces or others.

In a welcome move, Interim President Adly Mansour announced the creation of a judicial committee to investigate the violence. Based on how ineffective previous investigations have been, the body must have powers to subpoena witnesses, including members of the armed forces and police, and have access to official documents.

Amnesty International is calling on the Egyptian authorities to disclose which security bodies – from both the armed forces and the Ministry of Interior – were present during the incidents documented in this briefing.

The organization is also urging the authorities to ensure that all relatives of those killed and the injured receive medical certificates that indicate the real cause of death or injury. It is also calling on the authorities to conduct prompt, independent and impartial investigations into the killing and wounding of demonstrators.

Amnesty International's concerns at the risk of further political violence are heightened by statements by Muslim Brotherhood leaders vowing to continue protesting until the former President is reinstated, calling on their supporters to "rise up" and "resist", despite the ongoing deaths and injuries. Party leaders and officials should condemn incitement and violent attacks carried out against their political opponents.

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS

Under international human rights standards, security forces may only use firearms in response to an imminent threat of death or serious injury, and only as a last resort. Intentional lethal force may only be used when strictly unavoidable to protect life.

Any arbitrary or abusive use of force by security forces must be punished as a criminal offence. The authorities have a duty to conduct prompt, thorough, independent and impartial investigations into killings by security forces and bring the perpetrators to justice. In addition, they must impartially uphold the right to peaceful assembly, including where necessary by protecting protesters from violent attack by their opponents.

5 JULY: VIOLENCE ACROSS EGYPT

On Friday 5 July, supporters of Mohamed Morsi organized marches and protests across Egypt against his removal from power. Violence quickly erupted across the country, including in Cairo, Alexandria, Ismailia and Sharkiya. This led to at least 34 deaths and over a thousand injuries, according to officials of the Ministry of Health. Many died during clashes between pro- and anti-Morsi protesters, as security forces failed to intervene effectively to end the violence. At least four people died as a result of excessive and unnecessary lethal force by security forces in protests in front of the Republican Guard Club.

GREATER CAIRO

REPUBLICAN GUARD CLUB

Three days before the bloody events on 8 July, at least four people died and hundreds were injured as a result of “gunfire” during protests in front of the Republican Guard Club, according to the Ministry of Health. The army’s spokesperson denied that the military had used live ammunition against protesters, saying that the security forces had only fired tear gas and blank rounds, as well as warning shots into the air. Evidence collected by Amnesty International based on testimonies of injured protesters, other witnesses and medical personnel, as well as video recordings of the violence, cast serious doubts about such claims particularly as no protests opposing Mohamed Morsi were taking place in the area.

Following Friday prayers, pro-Morsi protesters gathered in front of the Republican Guard Club, where they believed Mohamed Morsi was being held. They were chanting slogans against what they dubbed a “military coup”, and held signs such as “Sisi” [General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi], where is my vote?”

Eyewitnesses told Amnesty International that there was a large security presence in front of the Republican Guard Club, including soldiers dressed in camouflage-style dark green or khaki-coloured uniforms. They also noticed the presence of men in balaclavas dressed in black, believed to be members of the Ministry of Interior’s Special Forces. Other protesters also reported seeing men in black uniforms behind the gate of the Club. Several protesters said they saw at least one armed man in plain clothes standing near the armed forces.

A barbed-wire fence separated the security forces from the protesters, who gathered across Salah Salem Road in front of the Republican Guard Club. A number of armoured vehicles were stationed by the barbed-wire fence – some mounted by armed soldiers.

Eyewitnesses say that the violence started just before 3pm when a man, described as having a beard, approached the barbed-wire fence to hang a picture of former President Morsi. An eyewitness standing nearby told Amnesty International what happened next:

“One of the soldiers removed the picture... The man, he had a beard and was holding a bag, got offended and approached the barbed wire again in defiance. Next thing I see is him being shot, then bullets started flying over our heads and at our feet on the ground... We retreated, and a few minutes later tear gas started coming from all directions.”

Another witness told Amnesty International that he had counted 16 tear gas canisters being fired. A video uploaded on YouTube shows a lifeless man lying metres away from the barbed-wire fence.¹

Mohamed Abdin, from the town of Biba in Bani Suef Governorate, told Amnesty International that a large march from Rahman al-Rahim Mosque arrived at the Republican Guard Club at about 2.15pm. His testimony about the beginning of the violence echoed that of other eyewitnesses. He explained that troops fired after a protester approached the fence to hang a picture of Mohamed Morsi, while other protesters were getting closer to the Republican Guard Club. He said that the first shot was fired by a man wearing civilian clothes who was standing next to uniformed security forces. He continued:

*“My friend, **Mahmoud Mohamed Rabi**’, from the same town, was among the first to fall [on the ground]. He was standing in the fourth row, but unlike us he did not bend down when they opened fire. The bullet hit him in the head. He was about to travel to Kuwait for work, his relatives had been collecting money for him for months to build him a better future... He was 21 years old, with all his future ahead of him... There was a lot of confusion and chaos amid the tear gas and shootings... I’ve never experienced anything like that.”*

Mohamed Helmy Youssef, a 44-year-old father of three from a village in the Delta Governorate of Daqahliya, also died in the violence. His cousin told Amnesty International that protesters were approaching the Presidential Guard Club chanting “peaceful, peaceful” and were about 100 metres away when the shooting started. According to his cousin, Mohamed Helmy Youssef was hit by several bullets, including a fatal shot to the throat. At the time of writing, Mohamed Helmy Youssef’s relatives have not received an autopsy report.

One protester told Amnesty International that the live fire only lasted a few minutes, followed by heavy tear gas.

After the violence subsided and the tear gas dissipated, protesters started regrouping on Salah Salem Road and more protesters arrived, including those marching from nearby Rabaa al-Adawiya. When the number of protesters increased and they started approaching the Republican Guard Club, violence broke out once more.

A 20-year-old man from the Governorate of al-Meniya, who was receiving treatment for injuries sustained as a result of shotgun pellets to his upper body, told Amnesty International that he was standing in the front row of the protesters when he was injured. He continued:

“I was hit about 20 to 30 minutes after the first shooting. We got closer [to the Republican Guard] and were standing peacefully. One of the officers with a megaphone told us to sit down. The first five rows did. Suddenly, without any warning, the shooting started... I thought these were just sound bombs [blank rounds] to scare people off because our numbers were increasing, then I realized that I was bleeding... There was a rain of shotgun pellets falling on us, accompanied by heavy tear gas.”

Mahmoud Gram, 28, who sustained minor pellet injuries to the head, also told Amnesty International that the security forces fired tear gas and used shotguns after ordering protesters to stop and sit down. He continued:

“A [tear gas] canister fell right next to me, so I tried to bend down to kick it further away, when I was hit in the back of the head with pellets... I wasn't even standing in the front rows. There was so much confusion, and the ambulances were not getting to us... Some of my friends were using motorcycles to transport the injured. I wasn't even that badly injured compared to the others, and ended up carrying others back towards the field hospital...”

All eyewitnesses interviewed by Amnesty International confirmed that no audible verbal warning was issued before the security forces opened fire, either before the first or second round of violence. A number of protesters acknowledged that the security forces initially fired shots into the air.

Doctors at three field hospitals nearby told Amnesty International that injured protesters were admitted between about 3pm and about 4.30pm. When Amnesty International arrived at the scene at about 5.15pm, the shooting had stopped, but the smell of tear gas still lingered in the air, while helicopters were circling overhead.

Field doctors documented injuries sustained from live bullets and shotgun pellets, as well as cases of suffocation due to the tear gas. They said that at least some of the wounded sustained gunfire injuries to their backs, suggesting that protesters were shot when fleeing. More serious cases were transferred to hospitals nearby, including Rabaa al-Adawiya and al-Ta'min al-Sihi. At Rabaa al-Adawiya, medical staff told Amnesty International that six people had been treated for shotgun pellet injuries, mainly to the lower body. At al-Ta'min al-Sihi Hospital, staff told Amnesty International that they had received four bodies and 90 injured men from the Republican Guard Club incident. The administration at the hospital refused to provide statistics.

TAHRIR SQUARE

Security forces failed to stop violence near Tahrir Square between Mohamed Morsi's opponents and supporters, which left at least three people dead and dozens injured. On 5 July, hundreds of supporters of the deposed President marched towards Tahrir Square, where anti-Morsi protesters were holding mass rallies. In a move seen as provocative and a recipe for disaster, the supporters of Mohamed Morsi arrived from 6 October Bridge, descending onto the Abdelminin Riyad entrance of the Square at around 6.30pm. Other Morsi supporters marched towards the Maspero Broadcasting and Television building. Clashes erupted when anti-Morsi protesters gathered by the entrance of the Square in an attempt to block their opponents' march. Morsi opponents were shot at with live bullets and shotgun pellets; in return using rocks and fireworks to prevent the supporters' entry into the Square. One of the anti-Morsi protesters explained:

“We defended the Square with rocks and the fireworks that we were just using to celebrate... Eventually, we overwhelmed them, and drove them off because we were much more numerous, and it looks like their munitions started running out.”

The Director of al-Mounira Hospital told Amnesty International that the first fatality arrived from Tahrir Square at 7.05pm and the second at 7.45pm. **Mohamed Salem**, 26, and another man whose identity remains unknown, died after they were hit with live bullets in the chest, according to hospital staff.

Another man, whose identity is also unknown, was brought into Hilal al-Ahmar Hospital from Tahrir Square that evening. Between them, the two hospitals treated some 190 injured people, including at least 13 who needed operations and hospitalization – mostly as a result of injuries caused by live bullets and shotgun pellets. Two further protesters were transferred to Qasr al-'Eini Hospital for treatment for shotgun pellet wounds to the eye.

Friends outside the hospital ward in which **Mohamed Arabi Kamal** was being treated told Amnesty International that Mohamed Arabi Kamal had been shot in the shoulder with a live bullet at about 8.30pm, when he and other protesters in Tahrir Square tried to prevent Morsi's supporters from entering the Square. His friend Islam explained:

"The fighting continued for hours... The army only came at 10.30pm, after those who died had died, and those who got injured got injured... Helicopters were flying above our heads throughout the fighting, just watching."

Despite the likelihood of clashes between the two rival groups, several eyewitnesses confirmed that members of security forces did not attempt to divert the supporters' march. Armed forces arrived at the scene only after the fighting had ended, and Morsi's supporters were pushed out of the Square. The police were nowhere to be seen.

According to policemen guarding a suspected Morsi supporter, he was allegedly caught by Morsi's opponents carrying grenades and beaten severely before being handed over to the Qasr al-Nil Police Station.

CLASHES IN AL-MANIAL

Security forces also failed to intervene when clashes broke out in the area of al-Manial on the evening of 5 July between local residents opposing Morsi, and his supporters who were reportedly attempting to march through the area to get to Tahrir Square from their sit-in near Cairo University. The clashes took place at the intersection between the University Bridge and Abdelaziz Saoud Street. Both sides were armed with sticks, rocks and shotguns. Several eyewitnesses reported that the supporters of Morsi also had other firearms. Clashes continued for several hours without any intervention from the police or other security forces. A total of five local residents died in the clashes.

Shortly before midnight, Amnesty International delegates arrived at Qasr al-'Eini Hospital, which was close to the site of the clashes, to witness scenes of chaos at the emergency room in the absence of any security presence. Dozens of those injured and their supporters were roaming around the hospital. A fight broke out between two injured patients – a supporter and an opponent of Mohamed Morsi – both of whom were covered in blood. Other patients and doctors sought to stop the fight. Doctors and nurses whose shifts had ended were trapped because the roads outside were blocked due to the fighting. One of them told Amnesty International:

"The casualties started arriving around 7pm, mostly from 'khartoush' [shotgun pellets] and live ammunition. When the gunfire around the hospital intensified, the police who were stationed outside disappeared, leaving us to our own devices. There is no security here at all, and we are afraid that armed people and thugs might come in and attack the hospital."

Morgue staff told Amnesty International that they had received the bodies of four people from the al-Manial area who had died in the clashes. In the presence of Amnesty International delegates, one further body was wheeled in shortly after midnight. According to staff, the hospital received 83 injured men and five men who were already dead. The hospital admitted 12 for operation or treatment. The 12 were injured either by live bullets or shotgun pellets. The staff added that two men had been injured in Tahrir Square by shotgun pellets in the eye. One of those who died, 30-year-old **Abdallah Said**, had been shot in the head by a bullet, according to a doctor who had attempted to save his life. His friend Ali, also a resident of al-Manial, told Amnesty International:

*“We heard that the Muslim Brothers were coming to al-Manial and attacking; they were on their way to Tahrir [Square]. So, we grouped ourselves together and went to defend our area. We were about 200... They were about 300 – they had guns and ‘khartoush’. Abdallah [Said] and another guy from our area, **Rami**, were shot dead.”*

Bystanders were also not spared. On 6 July, Amnesty International met 16-year-old **Fathi Mohamed Hassan**, who was recovering from a gunshot wound to his stomach at al-Mounira Hospital. His mother told Amnesty International:

“We don’t live very far from the clashes by al-Manial, we are in the Abu Rish area. At about 10.30 at night, [Fathi] went up to the roof, on the fifth floor, to watch what was happening as well as the planes overhead... Suddenly, I heard him screaming, we got him to the light and there was blood everywhere.”

The next day, the funeral procession of the five who died in the al-Manial clashes marched from Salah Eldin Mosque in al-Manial. Relatives were crying and chanting against the Muslim Brotherhood: “We will not remain silent until we get the rights of our Martyrs”. Others were blaming the security forces for not intervening for more than five hours to stop the bloodshed. One relative stated:

“Where were the security forces when our sons were killed yesterday one after another, for five hours not a single security personnel was present to stop the violence. This is not the promise we were given by the army and the Ministry of Interior”.

ALEXANDRIA

At least 17 people died in clashes between supporters and opponents of Mohamed Morsi in Alexandria on 5 July, as both groups organized rival protests in the city. A further 300 people were injured, including members of the security forces, according to Alexandria officials at the Ministry of Health and hospital staff. The latter told Amnesty International that they had mainly treated injuries resulting from live bullets, shotgun pellets and stabbings.

Violence erupted in the area of Sidi Gaber at around 3.30pm and continued late into the night. According to eyewitness testimonies, the security forces arrived late and only after several people had already been killed and injured. Both anti- and pro-Morsi protesters told Amnesty International that upon arrival the security forces were stationed on the side of anti-Morsi demonstrators – joining the clashes against his supporters.

Witnesses said that clashes started after a large pro-Morsi march from al-Abu Qeir Street

arrived in the Sidi Gaber area, after passing through Mushir Street. The protesters allegedly tore up anti-Morsi posters and minor altercations took place between them and local residents. Mohamed Hosni, who filmed the violence, told Amnesty International that Morsi supporters had taken his memory stick when they saw him filming. They eventually returned it, but only after erasing its contents. Morsi's supporters then gained control of Mushir Street and continued on to the Northern Area, the site of the military barracks and the target of their protest against the ousting of President Morsi. By around 4.30pm, local residents along with Morsi's opponents regrouped and clashes between the two sides re-erupted. Street skirmishes, some involving blades and sticks, continued for about an hour in the absence of the security forces.

During this time, Morsi supporters were filmed throwing youths from a rooftop on Mushir Street.² **Mohamed Badr al-Din**, 19, died in the attack, and can be seen in a video wearing jeans and a grey-black T-shirt. His mother told Amnesty International:

"I went to the market around 4pm, leaving Hamada [his nickname] sleeping at home. When I came back, he wasn't there, he went to watch the demonstrations happening near our street... I found out that he died; they broke his arms, broke his legs, and then threw him off [the roof]... People couldn't even get to him because the [Morsi] supporters were controlling the building and shooting anyone who approached... At this time, there was no government, no police seen anywhere... He was my only son."

Doctors at the General Alexandria University Hospital (known as al-miri) confirmed to Amnesty International delegates that Mohamed Badr al-Din had sustained multiple stab wounds, including to the chest, and multiple fractures.

Amnesty International met a survivor of the attack, a 17-year-old schoolboy from the neighbourhood of Sidi Gaber. He told Amnesty International what happened when supporters of Mohamed Morsi entered Mushir Street:

"They [the Morsi supporters] were taking over the street, so we run to take shelter in the building... There was me, Hamada, [name withheld], another older man from the area, and two guys who I did not know; they were not from our neighbourhood. We went up to the roof... The Brothers [members of the Muslim Brotherhood movement] broke the building's main door, and went up inside. The older man slipped down the airshaft... I was chased by the big bearded guy with a huge knife, the one with a white shirt and a black flag at the back, the one who appeared in the video... He started beating me, and raised a knife saying 'God is Great'. I escaped from him, also jumping and slipping down the airshaft [an opening in the building in the middle of the roof]. He threw several things down after me, including rocks... Once I got downstairs [six stories down], I saw the old man hiding... He signalled to me to stay quiet and hide in the spider webs... Hamada fell next to me, down the airshaft... They had thrown him several times, first from the water tank down the ledge, and then down the airshaft... [name withheld] had his throat cut; he is now in the hospital between life and death... About 15 minutes after sitting next to Hamada, I heard screams saying 'the army is coming, the army is coming'; so they [the Morsi supporters] retreated... I touched my face and I realized that my fingers were bleeding; I didn't even know my fingers were cut... I don't know what happened to the other two guys, the one wearing pink and the other green..."

Amnesty International saw a video, filmed by Mohamed Hosni, showing two men on Mushir Street by the same building being surrounded and beaten by a group of supporters of Mohamed Morsi. Their exact fate is unknown. The 17-year-old survivor underwent reconstructive surgery on his fingers, but still does not know if he will be able to use them again. His relative told Amnesty International:

“A group of people went to the police to tell them that youths were trapped in the building and were being attacked by the Brothers. They said: ‘stop spreading rumours’ and didn’t budge.”

A pro-Morsi protester told Amnesty International:

“Those youths were throwing rocks at our peaceful protest. I am not justifying what happened to them, but they started it and the security was not there to protect us. We had people pointing laser beams on the buildings attacking us.”

Before sunset, eyewitnesses reported the arrival of the riot police (Central Security Forces) and other police, who fired tear gas at the supporters of Mohamed Morsi. The security forces were stationed by the tramway lines, on the side of the anti-Morsi protesters. The opponents of Morsi reported that the wind blew the tear gas back at them. Four armoured vehicles belonging to the army were also reported to have arrived at the scene, but did not intervene according to testimonies.

Local residents joined the clashes en masse, angered by the throwing of youth from the roof and the death of another local resident, Islam Mohamed. Shotgun fire, Molotov cocktails and rocks were exchanged by the two sides. Meanwhile, security forces reportedly fired tear gas and shotguns at Morsi supporters. One eyewitness reported seeing Morsi supporters breaking into apartment buildings to gain positions on roofs, including a maternity clinic. A video filmed by Mohamed Hosni shows Morsi supporters firing what appear to be revolvers. Gunshots were also reportedly fired from the side of anti-Morsi protesters.

On 7 July, Amnesty International met families of three Morsi supporters killed during clashes: **Ahmed Abdu Abdellatif Qassem**, **Mamdouh Khamis** and **Mostafa Gaber**. Ahmed Abdu Abdellatif Qassem’s mother told Amnesty International:

“We all went to the march together, women, men and children leaving a mosque in Sidi Bishr and walking towards Sidi Gaber... After the clashes started, we lost each other, and next thing I know, sometime after sunset, he had been shot dead close to the Northern Area... There was a bullet in his chest and one in his head ... I am afraid that the Prosecution is not impartial; they don’t want to show that [Morsi’s] supporters were also killed.”

Morsi supporters were stabbed and beaten by local residents. Amnesty International interviewed 49-year-old **Alaa Eldin Mohamed** in hospital as he was recovering from stab wounds to the stomach, leg and shoulder. He said:

“I was in a march that was coming from the train station in Moharam Beik; we reached the Northern Area at around 4 [in the afternoon] and stationed ourselves there. There were clashes between supporters and the residents of the area until midnight. The residents were

holding knives and shooting shotgun pellets at us. Later, at sunset time, the Central Security Forces arrived and shot tear gas and shotgun pellets in our direction. By midnight, the police had used lots of tear gas and dispersed the protesters. I was not able to breathe; I ran to one of the buildings in al-Mushir Street and asked one of the residents on the ground floor to help me; [instead] he turned me in to around five other residents, who beat me with sticks and stabbed me in the back, belly and hand. I was not able to breathe; I felt like I was dying. I heard one person saying 'stop beating the old man'; he took me to a police car and the police brought me to the hospital."

Amnesty International interviewed 32-year-old **Mansour Hendawy** in hospital as he was being treated for stab wounds. He said:

"I arrived at the Northern Area in Sidi Gaber at around 6pm; shortly after I arrived I found the police shooting tear gas and the [Morsi] supporters responding by throwing stones. After midnight, the police fired excessive amounts of tear gas and shotgun pellets. I could see them firing... then I was shot by pellets in the left side of my body. The people took me to the Military [Mostafa Kamel] Hospital but I was afraid I would be arrested if they found out I was a supporter of Morsi. I asked the hospital staff to let me leave, which I then did. Once at the gate of the hospital, I found around 15 residents running towards me. I ran towards the direction of Port Said Street. I found one building guard and asked him for help. He ignored me, so I stopped a taxi and got in it but the five residents forcibly got me out of the taxi and started beating me with sticks and knives. I escaped and ran towards the police vehicles and then I lost consciousness. The police then transferred me to the hospital."

Local residents were also injured in the clashes. **Khamis Suliman**, a father of four, told Amnesty International that he went to protest against Morsi's supporters on Mushir Street, near the tramway lines, because he was angered by their attack on local residents. He sustained shotgun pellet injuries to his upper body at about 5.30pm.

Amnesty International spoke to 22-year-old **Fadi Emil**, who was in the same hospital. He had sustained a shotgun pellet injury to his left eye. He said:

"I joined the other opposition protesters, and was standing in a side street near the Northern Area. The police were there, on our side, trying to disperse the supporters with tear gas. The army was not doing anything. It was still daylight when I was shot; I immediately lost consciousness."

Clashes continued until about midnight when Morsi supporters were overwhelmed. The men and women who remained sought shelter inside Sidi Gaber Mosque until members of the armed forces secured their safe exit, according to witnesses.

At least one Morsi supporter was reportedly beaten to death by residents after being apprehended. Eyewitnesses reported that suspected members of the Muslim Brotherhood and other Morsi supporters were chased down streets by angry residents. Several alleged Morsi supporters were arrested, including the man with the black flag seen in the video of the killing of Mohamed Badr al-Din (see above).

In addition to refraining from unnecessary and excessive use of force, police have a duty to

protect members of the public, including peaceful protesters regardless of their political affiliation. This duty derives from the state's positive obligation to protect the right to life and other human rights, including the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, from interference by others. In exercising this duty, police must act without discrimination on grounds such as political opinion, religion, sex, or other status.

8 JULY: VIOLENCE AT THE REPUBLICAN GUARD CLUB

Violence in the early hours of 8 July around Cairo's Republican Guard Club left at least 54 people dead – including three members of the security forces – and over 400 injured, according to officials including at the Ministry of Health. Testimonies gathered by Amnesty International indicate that security forces used unnecessary and excessive force against supporters of Mohamed Morsi, including intentional lethal force against protesters who were not endangering the lives of security forces or others. Most testimonies point to the presence of members of the armed forces, including the Republican Guard, and members of the Ministry of Interior at the scene at the time of the deaths.

Shortly after the incident, Amnesty International visited al-Ta'min al-Sihi Hospital, the Rabaa al-Adawiya field hospital, Heliopolis Hospital, Manshiyat Bikri Hospital and Demerdash Hospital, all in Cairo, and spoke to medical staff, administrators and injured protesters. According to those interviewed, fatal casualties and the injured were pouring in between about 4am and about 8am that morning. Most patients needed treatment for wounds caused by live bullets and shotgun pellets, with others needing treatment for the effects of tear gas. Patients at al-Ta'min al-Sihi Hospital complained about the administration's refusal to provide them with medical reports. At the field hospital in Rabaa al-Adawiya, Amnesty International was shown bullets of different calibre that staff said had been collected around the site of the clashes. The bullets had the Arab Republic of Egypt ("g.m.a" in Arabic) insignia on them.

The al-Ta'min al-Sihi Hospital received 35 bodies in the course of the morning. Of these, two male bodies were brought in from police stations, raising concerns regarding torture or other ill-treatment, particularly in light of the announced arrests of protesters by security forces during the clashes.

Demerdash Hospital received 40 injured people and one dead body with a bullet injury to the head. The injuries were either from shotgun pellets or gunfire. The staff in the hospital stated that eight of the 40 cases were admitted for operations or treatment. Three had been injured in the eye by shotgun pellets and another five had been shot in the back and shoulders.

In Manshiyat Bikri Hospital, four people brought in that morning died as a result of gunfire injuries: two from injuries to the head, one who was shot in the chest and one who was shot in neck. The hospital admitted a further 18 people who had gunfire injuries.

At the Zinhoum main morgue in Cairo, Amnesty International counted 51 bodies. Large numbers of relatives were there to receive the bodies of their loved ones. Outside the morgue, at least eight ambulances were queued waiting for their turn to take bodies into the morgue. Each ambulance held two bodies.

Relatives of those killed carried the bodies from the ambulances to the morgue, chanting "Allahu Akhbar" ("God is Great"), and calling for "martyrs' rights" for those responsible for

the shootings.

One ambulance staff member said that all the bodies they had received had been shot. An ambulance driver stated that after the shootings they had tried to enter the area around the Republican Guard Club from Marghany Street to take away the injured, but were stopped by soldiers who threatened that they would shoot at the ambulances if they tried to get through. The army allowed ambulances inside the area from only one street. The driver added that the ambulances were searched by soldiers while entering and leaving the area.

The Health Ministry denied reports that women and children were among the dead. One relative told Amnesty International that inside the morgue he had seen the bodies of two children appearing aged between 12 and 15. Amnesty International delegates were not allowed to see the bodies to independently verify the claim.

During a press conference by the Ministry of Interior and the armed forces on 8 July, the military's spokesman said that the security forces had been compelled to respond to an attack by protesters in the vicinity of the Republican Guard Club. He alleged that some protesters initially threw rocks at the security forces, and then used shotguns and other firearms as the situation escalated, leading to the death of one military officer. The Ministry of Interior's spokesperson said two other members of the security forces had died as a result of the "attack".

Accounts collected from eyewitnesses, including injured protesters, paint a different picture. Protesters, interviewed separately, told Amnesty International that the violence erupted immediately following the dawn prayer (3.17am). Protesters, camped out by the Republican Guard compound since Friday 5 July, said that they were praying collectively, facing the direction of Mecca, with their backs turned to the Republican Guard when violence erupted. Most testimonies indicate that security forces attempted to disperse the sit-in in the vicinity of the Republican Guard Club, closing in on protesters from three directions – the two entrances to the sit-in on Salah Salem Road and from the Republican Guard Club, and destroying the tents. As some protesters resisted, including through force, violence escalated.

According to several eyewitnesses, as the prayer was coming to an end and confusion reigned, they heard gunfire. The imam (prayer leader) used a loudspeaker to call for calm and repeated several times that the protest was peaceful. Several protesters confirmed that they had received warnings from security forces not to approach the barbed wire fence erected in front of the Republican Guard compound. They also noted that organizers of the protest had instructed participants not to use rocks, Molotov cocktails, fireworks and hand-held laser pointers (used in demonstrations in Egypt to point at a target) during the protests. While some protesters clearly used violence during the incident, the response of the security forces was disproportionate and led to deaths and injuries among protesters not directly involved in the violence and of those not posing a serious threat to the lives of security forces and others.

Gamal Abdelminin, 49, from Kafr Al-Dawar in Bihira Governorate, described how the clashes erupted:

"We were just giving our salutations [at the end of prayer]; I heard screaming and a warning coming from members of the 'People's Committee' [members of protests entrusted with

managing security] at the entrance to the sit-in on Salah Salem... Suddenly, there was abnormal firing and complete chaos [and] really heavy tear gas. It was really difficult to see and breathe; and a rain of khartoush [shotgun pellets] fell on us. I could also hear live rounds and see shots fired... I lay down on the ground on my stomach... Foot soldiers started approaching us; I was hit with something on the back of my head... Behind me there were more soldiers, and armoured vehicles were coming in on Salah Salem closing in on us. I ran towards al-Tayaran Street [a street perpendicular to Salah Salem Road, leading to the main protest by pro-Morsi protesters], when I was hit with pellets on my left side."

A woman in her late forties, who sustained minor shotgun injuries to her feet, gave Amnesty International a similar account of how the violence started. She said:

"I had just finished the prayer with the others near the tents, where the women have been sleeping with our children, when I saw men running towards us. Then the tear gas started falling on us... I did not know what to do and where to take the children. I was lost... I couldn't go back to the tents because we would suffocate, and I didn't know where to run because of the shooting... I ended-up crouching under a tree and saw [security forces] coming towards us. They were coming from three directions: the two entrances to the sit-in on Salah Salem, and from the Republican Guard itself... They were soldiers on foot, armoured vehicles with 'snipers' on top, lots of men in black wearing protective gear and holding shields... There were shots and tear gas coming from all directions, until the protesters were driven back to al-Tayaran Street... I also saw people shooting from the top of buildings... There were men lying on the ground in pools of blood in front of me; I just stayed there under the tree praying... I thought that was it... I managed to escape from a side street when troops advanced toward al-Tayaran."

Her relative, a 33-year-old woman, sustained more serious injuries to her back, and was screaming in pain when Amnesty International delegates visited her in the hospital. She was injured when she was next to her tent.

Another woman, a mother of one who was receiving treatment for shotgun pellet wounds to her face, chest and shoulders, told Amnesty International that she was standing next to her tent when shot. She was eventually transported out of the vicinity of the Republican Guard by an ambulance in the presence of security forces. She said:

"The ambulance was really late because it couldn't drive in while the shooting was still ongoing; I was covered in blood by the time it arrived... the 'Interior' [how members of the Ministry of Interior are commonly referred to] were very dismissive to me, they said: 'Don't they want to be martyred? Leave them to bleed'."

She told Amnesty International that she had participated in protests because she believed that Mohamed Morsi was deposed illegally, and that she was there to say: "Where is my vote?"

In the same hospital, a boy in second-preparatory school was receiving treatment for shotgun pellet wounds sustained to the head, face and legs. According to his neighbour, the boy was at the sit-in along with his relatives when the violence erupted.

Several male protesters told Amnesty International that they had tried to fight the advance of the security forces and put up barriers on al-Tayaran Street when they were pushed out of Salah Salem Road. They said it seemed like the violence started at the left entrance of the sit-in. A Morsi supporter from Tanta, Gharbeya Governorate, told Amnesty International:

“I was praying behind when I heard that there was a problem by the entrance. I ran there to help the others, and saw at least two armoured vehicles, and loads of members of the Interior in black on foot, I think [they were] riot police... We tried to prevent them from getting closer, throwing rocks... There was also firing from adjacent buildings... We were pushed back towards the stage [on Salah Salem Street], and then we also came under fire and tear gas from the Republican Guard, the soldiers behind the barbed wire fence and the people standing on top of buildings inside... I was then hit in the foot, and limped back to a tricycle leaving through al-Tayaran Street to a field hospital.”

Another man told Amnesty International that street fights broke out immediately after prayer:

“Once the imam completed the prayer, we heard people screaming and there were people running in all directions... The women got out of the tents... The security forces were screaming: ‘go back, go back’, while firing tear gas and shots... We picked up the canisters of the tear gas and threw them back at them... I was going back and forth to catch my breath from the tear gas and [then back] to the front lines to protect our sit-in.”

Another protester, an 18-year-old university engineering student, told Amnesty International that he was shot in the legs while he was trying to carry other injured people away from the entrance of the sit-in where the violence had started. He said:

“I was near the entrance, when I heard the warning from our colleagues by the gate that we were under attack... Immediately after, tear gas and firing on us started... I saw people falling in front of me: some hit in the head, others in the chest. As I was bending over to pick up one of them, I felt the bullet hit me in the knee... Other protesters helped me to retreat towards the field hospital.”

Mohamed Metwally, whose 29-year-old cousin was shot in the neck, told Amnesty International:

“...we were praying ‘fajr’ (the dawn prayer) with our backs to the Republican Guards. At the end of the prayer we heard shooting from behind us; suddenly it became chaotic and I found my cousin, who had been shot in the neck. We carried him to the ambulance but it was very hard because the security forces fired tear gas and we could not breathe or see.”

Ali Saleh AbdelRahman, 34, was killed after he was shot in the chest. His cousin, Reda Abdallah, told Amnesty International:

“We were at the end of the prayer when we heard gunshots. I looked behind and could see soldiers dressed in black shooting – then they started firing tear gas. I could see people falling; I ran towards al-Tayaran Street and later I found... my cousin. We took him to al-Ta’min al-Sihi Hospital but he was dead.”

The relatives showed Amnesty International death certificates indicating that their loved ones had died as a result of “gunfire”. Most had been shot in the neck, chest or head. One relative said that the death certificate gave his cousin’s cause of death as “burning”, but told Amnesty International that the man had actually died as a result of gunshots to the chest.

The violence continued for several hours, progressively moving down al-Tayaran Street as protesters erected barriers to prevent the security forces from advancing. One protester told Amnesty International:

“When I heard that the security forces were trying to disperse our sit-in, I left Rabaa al-Adawiya where I was camped out, and went along al-Tayaran Street to support the others... I saw armoured vehicles moving on to us, and several rows of foot soldiers... There was also shooting coming from the surrounding buildings; one of the buildings caught fire, and we let the firefighters through... Immediately after, we came under heavy fire again, and really thick tear gas... It was like they were emptying machine guns on us, and immediately reloading... People were falling around me... I leaned down to help someone who had just fallen in front of me, and was hit in the shoulder with a live bullet.”

The Public Prosecution has initiated investigations into the violence, including by questioning eyewitnesses and injured protesters at hospitals. In order to ensure that the course of justice is served, Amnesty International urges the authorities to guarantee that all relatives of victims and injured protesters obtain genuine medical documentation establishing the cause of injury; and that no forensic evidence is lost or tampered with. Shortcomings in the evidence gathering process during investigations into the killings of protesters during the “25 January Revolution” have contributed to court acquittals of police officers and other officials accused of excessive use of force.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The evidence gathered by Amnesty International in Egypt strongly indicates that some of those who died in protests and political violence on 5 and 8 July were unlawfully killed by security forces using excessive force, including lethal force against people who posed no danger to the security forces or others. Others were killed in clashes between supporters and opponents of the ousted President amid the failure of security forces to intervene to stop the violence.

Amnesty International is calling on the Egyptian authorities to:

- Conduct prompt, thorough, independent and impartial investigations into killings and injuries by security forces, including the army, and bring the perpetrators of unlawful killings and arbitrary and excessive force to justice in fair trials, regardless of their rank, and without recourse to the death penalty;

- Ensure that the committee established by the Interim President to investigate violence in front of the Republican Guard Club on 8 July has powers of search and seizure and to subpoena witnesses and suspects, including officials from the armed forces and the Ministry of Interior;

- Ensure that investigations look into the role of security forces in failing to protect lives;

- Conduct prompt, independent and impartial investigations into the political violence in which demonstrators on both sides were killed and injured by their political opponents in order to establish individuals responsible and ensure their prosecution in fair trials and without recourse to the death penalty;

- Ensure all investigations into killings must follow the methods set out in the UN Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions. Findings should be presented to judicial authorities with the view of bringing those responsible to justice. Such judicial authorities must include effective safeguards against interference and/or influence from police or security officers as well as politicians. Those appointed for this task must be individuals of integrity and ability with appropriate qualifications, and must enjoy the trust of victims;

- Ensure that full autopsy and medical reports are issued to facilitate thorough investigations and ensure access to justice and reparations for all victims and their families;

- Protect members of the public, including peaceful protesters, regardless of their political affiliation, and uphold the right to peaceful assembly, including where necessary by protecting protesters from violent attacks by their opponents; and

- Ensure that all victims and relatives of victims receive adequate reparation, including

but not limited to financial compensation.

Amnesty International is urging all political leaders to condemn human rights abuses by their supporters and call on them to end violent attacks against supporters of the other side.

ENDNOTES

¹ The video is available on-line at: <http://bit.ly/18Lrksa>

² The video is available on-line at: <http://bit.ly/12BX4by>

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