

# MARSEILLE FORUM JUNE 2019

# Egypt



## FINANCIALIZATION AND GENTRIFICATION FROM HOUSING TO CAIRO

### Gentrification process

### Financialization and evictions

Under the impetus of the Cairo Master Plan for 2050, the government is striving to beautify the city, create new green spaces everywhere, and make Cairo one of the most attractive cities on the world stage.

Gazirat al-Dhahab Island is an urban area that the government wishes to allocate to "better use". But this "best use" has been clearly predefined by the Ministry of Housing and Public Services. The option was to sell the land to a non-Arab investor from Egypt who would use the space to build tourist facilities.

Source: Habitat International Coalition - Debate on the Right to the City 2018

The commodification of housing is also a more general concern in Egypt. Egyptians are culturally predisposed to the acquisition of real estate as a form of investment. As one expert commented, "**The banking system in Egypt is real estate**". According to CAPMAS, there are at least 3.8 million secondary investment properties.

This phenomenon can only worsen with the recent intentions announced by the government to market Egyptian real estate as an export product by attracting foreign investors to the country. **To this end, the government has expressed its interest in initiating luxury development projects throughout Cairo.** (...)

It is particularly alarming to learn of the forced evictions that took place on the island on 16 July 2017 (...)

Source: Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing - Oct. 2018

### The Egyptian Constitution of 2014 sets out the right of residents to adequate, safe and healthy housing, which preserves human dignity and achieves social justice (art. 78)

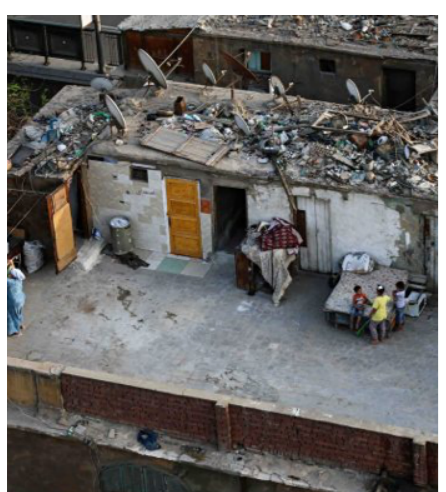
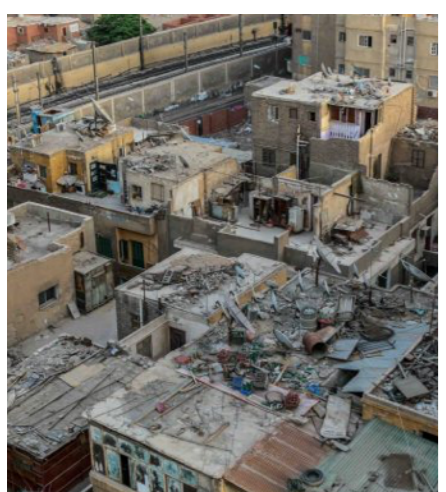
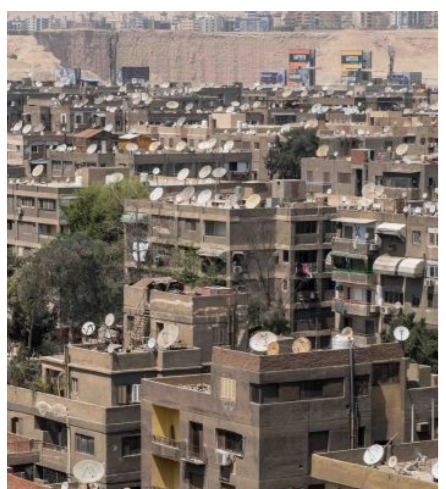
The article also requires the government to develop a strategic housing plan, regulate public lands and deal with informal settlements and unplanned areas.

**Egypt has ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**, which is incorporated into domestic law and therefore enjoys a higher status in its constitutional order than national laws and regulations. The country has not yet ratified an international complaints mechanism under the United Nations human rights treaties, which limits the ability of its residents to submit individual complaints to international human rights treaty bodies.

**A new law on the rights of persons with disabilities** was adopted by Parliament in February 2018. This law reserves at least 5% of new social housing for people with disabilities.

In 2016, the Egyptian President announced that **the national government would create 1 million housing units** to fill the country's housing deficit. In a short time, 600,000 units were built.

Source: Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing - October 2018



A real life above the rooftops of Cairo

Source : Urbanité

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