COP27 Quick Security Checklist & Recommendations

WG Manifestations & Safety

Women & Gender Constituency

WOMEN & GENDER
CONSTITUENCY

COP27 is taking place in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, from the 6th to 18th of November 2022.

Egypt is a unique context for COP27 and has different risk implications.

Suggested sources to check out:

"Know your rights:
A legal protection guide for defending your rights"

Youth Climate Movement Safety Hub

Surveillance Self-Defense

Highly suggested reading:

Know your rights: A legal protection guide for defending your rights"

I. Snapshot of a few important Egyptian laws to be aware of relating to:
- Pre-trial detention
- Public protest
- Security
- Freedom of movement

II. Suggested DO's and DON'Ts while in Egypt:
- DO's / DON'Ts for activists
- DO's / DONT's for protesting
- DO's / DON'Ts for journalists and lawyers
- General Practices

III. FAQs: What to do if your rights are or may be violated:
- At the airport, entering or exiting Egypt
- At a public protest, rally or demonstration
- In case of search and/or arrest
- Related to LGBTQI+ issues

General Quick Checklist
Before you travel

COP27 Checklist before you leave

- ❏ **Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months** from the time you will enter Egypt. You also need to have unused pages remaining in your passport for stamps/visa. Keep a copy of your passport somewhere in your luggage.

- ❏ **Letter of accreditation from the UNFCCC - either a printed copy or a copy on your phone. Make sure to download it to your phone for easy accessibility.**

- ❏ **Visa and travel ticket documents.** Other supporting documents you submitted as part of your visa application (e.g. proof of funds)
  (Don't throw away your boarding pass at the end of your flight, you may still need it!)

- ❏ **Vaccination certificate** - either physical document or on your phone (physical is recommended)

- ❏ **Important phone numbers and travel information written down** in case your device is seized, stolen, or lost (do not include any sensitive details such as real names or action plans)

COP27 Checklist before you leave

❏ **Think carefully about what items you need to bring** (considering the duration of your trip and the activities you will participate in) **and what might arouse suspicion if your luggage is searched by border or customs officials when entering Egypt** (e.g banners, T-shirts will specific slogans, etc).

❏ If you bring any, it is suggested to **keep banners in the luggage bag** and do not raise them before arriving in Sharm el-Sheikh

❏ **Inform a friend or relative about your travel route and itinerary**, including details such as flight numbers, times of arrival and the address of your accommodation

❏ **Remember to share the contact details of your delegation lead** or another member of your group in case of an emergency.

What not to pack: **https://www.ycmsafety.com/preparing/#block-a48c27a7b34ddc0d824b**

COP27 Checklist before you leave

Egypt is actively working to exclude queer rights organisations and known activists from attending COP27, and actions regarding queer rights are unlikely to receive approval during COP27. Displaying symbolism associated with pride is not recommended during direct actions and has resulted in cases of criminalisation in the past.

Although not explicitly illegal, homosexuality is not widely accepted and the authorities use debauchery and prostitution laws to target members of the **LGBTIQ+ community in Egypt**.

WGC condemn these human rights abuses and do not wish to police anyones expression of identity, but these have been some guidelines from international lawyers on how to stay safe when attending COP.

- ❏ Do exercise extra caution if you identify with the LGBTQI+ community. Public expressions of queer identity may be criminalized under "debauchery" laws
- ❏ Carefully remove stickers from your devices: includes overt political messaging or symbolism (e.g. digital security, activism or mobilisation, Human rights, Rainbow motifs, LGBTQ+, or anything contains political messaging or religious symbolism.
- ❏ Consider the consequences in advance of bringing and displaying/wearing banners, flags, stickers, T-shirts or similar with pro-LGBTQI+ language, including the unjustified use of force or arrest.
- ❏ Where possible travel in a pair or small group.
- ❏ Be mindful that participation in any meeting or event except in the place designated for that purpose by the Egyptian authorities may subject you to unwanted police attention.

COP27 Checklist before you leave

- ❏ Be careful with conversations in public transport. Taxis for instance will have surveillance
- ❏ If you can't avoid travelling alone, ensure you plan check-ins with a buddy who can mobilise support if you run into trouble or become uncontactable.
- ❏ To the extent that you feel comfortable, it is advisable to wear clothing that will not attract unwanted attention.
- ❏ Be prepared for questions about your identity and consider what may be risky to disclose. You may wish to have a cover story to avoid revealing aspects that increase your risk.
- ❏ At border control, you could face difficulties if you present as a gender different to what is stated in your passport. Be aware that this could materialise as additional screening and questioning and, in some contexts, body searches or detention. Pat-downs by airport security are based on the gender you present, not your ID. Wearing a prosthetic or binder can lead to further questioning.
- ❏ If you are undergoing hormone therapy (and especially if you are carrying needles) it is advised to have a doctor's note that could provide a cover story. Always carry a prescription together with your medication.
- ❏ Safe space team should be seen as support, they cannot solve conflicts, but they can be there for people in meetings with police, lawyers etc
- ❏ Reach out to someone in WGC if something would happen, to not carry it all by themselves
- ❏ If something happens - you need to drop your other tasks (no matter how urgent they are) and be present, listen to the person who has been aggrieved. **Don't lose track of what is important here**

For more info: https://www.ycmsafety.com/safety-basics/#block-08a968c24204fcd9cd0b

If you are considerably fearing about your own or someone's safety, consider the following:

❏ **Create a check-in plan with a trusted person who is not travelling**.
- This means agreeing on points during your itinerary when you will contact your trusted person (your check in buddy) to let them know you are ok. They will expect your contact and can raise the alarm if you remain uncontactable for an agreed period of time.
- Agree what action they should take if you become uncontactable and identify possible actions they can take in case you experience any difficulties at the airport during your journey.

Check In Plan

1. Create a BUDDY SYSTEM. With your buddy, agree how frequently to check in during your journey (e.g. before boarding the plane, after arriving at your hotel, during your stay)
2. Agree how you will check in (e.g. via a Signal message).
3. For each check in, estimate the timeframe for the check in, allowing for some flexibility to account for normal delays, etc.
4. Identify action steps in case you miss a check in and remain uncontactable. The actions may escalate based on the time you remain out of contact.
5. Ensure your buddy has contact numbers for people they can reach out to in case you encounter any difficulties during your travel.

For a sample scenario, check the source of this recommendation:
https://www.ycmsafety.com/travelling/#block-yui_3_17_2_1_1663854150110_2500387

Digital Security Quick Checklist Before you travel

It has been suggested to refrain from doing the following in CAIRO:

- Using social media, personal accounts, especially to defame the Egyptian Government - particularly WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter
- Sending or sharing emails/pictures/documents via your accounts
- Participate in any type of manifestation
- Carry/hold any type of advocacy banners

Digital Security Checklist

- ❏ **Consider removing fingerprint unlock and FaceID** - While these settings may seem appealing as convenient, enabling them means an officer could physically force you to unlock your device with your fingerprint or face. In protest situations in particular—or in any other situation in which you may be more likely to encounter a government demand to search your phone (such as at a border crossing)— it is suggested you *turn this functionality off.* Use a number/letter-based password, and lock or turn off your devices when travelling through checkpoints.
  - ➔ In iOS, you can disable this by going into Settings -> Touch ID & Passcode (or Settings -> Face ID & Passcode, depending on your iPhone version) and removing each of the fingerprints, or tapping Reset Face ID in this menu.
  - ➔ In Android, disabling this feature may depend on your device manufacturer. For Pixel devices, go into Settings -> Security -> Pixel Imprint and delete the fingerprints from this menu.

- ❏ **It is highly suggested that your devices and accounts should be protected by a strong password**: 8-12 random characters that are easy to remember and type in when you unlock your device. Reusing passwords is an exceptionally bad security practice. If a bad actor gets ahold of a password that you've reused across multiple services, they can gain access to many of your accounts.

Digital Security Checklist

- ❏ **Procure to keep all your sensitive communications to an encrypted app. Signal is the most secure.** Download and set-up Signal ahead of your travel, and make a plan with your activist friends and colleagues about communication protocols
  - Signal is an app available on both iOS and Android that offers strong encryption to protect both text messages and voice calls. This type of protection is called end-to-end encryption, which secures your communications in transit.

- ❏ **Consider configuring disappearing messages in Signal and WhatsApp.** Remember that changes to the disappearing messages setting only impacts *new* messages sent to that group. Delete the entire chat with sensitive information to clear messages sent before you turned on disappearing messages

- ❏ **Be careful with your phone settings** - sometimes your messages are not seen in your phone's lock screen

Digital Security Checklist

- ❏ **It is recommended to log out of all social media accounts, email, and other online services that might hold sensitive information** on all of your devices before travelling. You can access them once in Sharm el-Sheikh

- ❏ **Consider the information you post or chat on sensitive topics unless you know everyone who is in your group.** Consider setting up several layers of communication, keeping sensitive details within a small group of trusted individuals.

- ❏ Google and other cloud vendors track who accesses and edits documents, so your username and IP address may be logged. At a minimum, it is recommended to **use private browsing** when accessing public files

- ❏ **Be very careful opening strange email attachments** and double check with the person who sent it before you open it if you're unsure.

- ❏ **Consider to only use your own chargers or from people you know** - other devices may have been tampered with and can access your data.

Digital Security Checklist before you leave

In practice, Virtual Private Networks can:

- Protect your Internet activity from prying eyes, especially if you're connected to an unsecure Wi-Fi network in a café, airport, library, or somewhere else.

However, **it has been notified that VPN are considered of illegal use in Egypt.**
If you decide to use it, please do have this in mind

As option, **consider downloading IN ADVANCE a browser that might add a layer of security** to your communication such as Tor Browser

How to install Tor Browser in Windows: https://ssd.eff.org/en/module/how-use-tor-windows
How to install Tor Browser in Mac: https://ssd.eff.org/en/module/how-use-tor-macos

Digital Security Resources:

❏ **Strong password creation - Inspiration sources:**
  - https://ssd.eff.org/en/module/animated-overview-how-make-super-secure-password-using-dice
  - https://ssd.eff.org/en/module/creating-strong-passwords

❏ **Animated Overview: Protecting Your Device From Hackers**
  - https://ssd.eff.org/en/module/animated-overview-protecting-your-device-hackers

❏ **If using WhatsApp and concerned about contacts writing you, check this guide with security settings:**
  - https://ssd.eff.org/en/module/how-use-whatsapp-android
  - https://ssd.eff.org/en/module/how-use-whatsapp-ios

❏ **Deep dive into digital security:**
  - https://www.ycmsafety.com/digital-security-checklist
  - https://static1.squarespace.com/static/6328a9c24da8b84bc226e515/t/634666885c87e33191f09bff/1665558153401/DigitalSecurityChecklist_EN.pdf
  - https://ssd.eff.org/en/module/attending-protest

❏ **Protecting yourself in social networks:**
  - https://ssd.eff.org/en/module/protecting-yourself-social-networks

General Quick Checklist
At the airport

COP27 Checklist at the airports

❏ Some sources recommend to fully turn off (shut-down) all devices **before crossing borders** and going through security checks and avoid connecting to **unsecured WiFi networks** where possible

❏ If stopped by the airport officials, the main questions asked are about: name, ID, visa, purpose of your trip, funds - these are normal procedures.
  ● However, **they are not allowed to search your mobile or laptop**- if stopped and asked as beyond ID, you have the **right to remain silent and ask for interpreter/lawyer.** Send messages to lawyers/ interpreters. Right to communicate with the embassy if it is safer for you. The level of check may vary depending on the circumstances, but it is wise to take basic steps to limit access to things that are sensitive (e.g. notes about planned actions)

❏ Egyptian constitution protects every individual, incl. LGBTIQ+ groups. However, Egyptian laws do not protect your rights; they prosecute members of the LGBTIQ+ community or anybody who express their sexual identity. Please avoid arguing with the officer, and do not touch/push. During conferences, more freedom.

General Quick Checklist
During your stay

COP27 Quick checklist during your stay

- ❏ Keep safe communication via Signal or any other secure platforms with your advocate friends, organization, delegation

- ❏ **Buddy up. Where possible, stick together in pairs or small groups.** This is especially important when travelling or participating in external activities. It is useful to keep in touch and arrange **check ins** if you need to travel alone

- ❏ If leaving by yourself any location, or any of your friends leaves a place alone, check-up with your close contacts if the person has arrived safe to the destination

- ❏ Prepare a drafted in a chat so in case of urgency you will only need to make a click and send it to close contacts requesting for support (i.e. legal)

COP27 Quick checklist during your stay

- ❏ It is advised to avoid drinking alcohol in the streets or anywhere other than a licensed restaurant or bar (as drinking in unauthorized places can lead to arrest). Also advised is to avoid the use, possession of any illegal drugs or narcotics, even in small amounts.

- ❏ On surveillance, please keep the recommendations mentioned before.
  According to recent news in the Guardian
  "New surveillance technologies are also in place, so much so that Maj Gen Khaled Fouda, governor of South Sinai, recently boasted to a local cable channel that any visitors entering overland will be extensively searched at a gate encircling the city. He added that 500 white taxis commissioned to transport attenders during the conference will be equipped with interior cameras, all connected to a local "security observatory", to monitor the footage"

- ❏ Consider **who can hear your conversations. Make sure to only hold sensitive conversations in secure and private locations**.

- ❏ Use the official UNFCCC COP27 APP to navigate during the events and negotiations
  (There is an additional COP27 Egypt Mobile App which will ask for information, DO NOT feel you need to download it and give your personal information)

COP27 Quick checklist during your stay

- ❏ "No naming and shaming" —> no Against one single country - aware of political sensibility
- ❏ State as detailed as possible the Purpose - Title - Banners and material to be used during the action. This will allow the Secretariat team to help so you can bring material/messages inside
- ❏ People participating need to respect the code of conduct
- ❏ Avoid using any language in banner/during action which is contrary to UN approved/agreed phrases.
- ❏ The nominating organization will be responsible for any of the actions of the nominated members be it from local CSO or any other country
- ❏ Any plans for the action/demo need to be sent to the Secretariat by 3 PM the previous day and the Secretariat will try to revert by 5 PM

For information about the clearance process:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1uMHeAhJDE8haG-fnnAMbNOoYEoH_mCki

Notes from Briefing:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fLRPpGeutHI5zNj7tajdTNBKeHQeKPRHJ0qofgd3y1k/edit

COP27 Quick checklist during your stay

❑ **Take photos and videos without unlocking your device - particularly in CAIRO**

Catching that perfect image is something you want to be ready for, and powerful images can help support your cause. If you've chosen a strong password, entering it into the device takes precious time, and you risk the moment passing before you're able to take the picture. Luckily, iOS and Android allow you to take photos and videos without unlocking your device.

❑ **Be mindful of other protestors in your photos and videos**

If you are taking photos or videos of people at the protest, be mindful of what you post. If you post photos online where protestors or bystanders' faces are identifiable, law enforcement or vigilantes might track them down and arrest or harass them. Consider obscuring the faces of anyone who has their eyes or mouth visible

Discuss with organisers before uploading photos and videos of direct actions that show people's faces. Consider how your social media posts not only put you at risk, but also others who you are participating in direct actions or events with.

COP27 Checklist during your stay

MONEY

- ❏ Currency: Egyptian Pound (EGP)

- ❏ Max 5,000 EGP (approx USD 260) when entering or exiting Egypt

  - **no limit on foreign currency**, but more than USD 10.000 must be declared

- ❏ **Carry cash** for immediate needs - ATM might be hard to find and **high fees** paying by card

- ❏ International debit and credit cards are accepted (**Visa and Mastercard**) in Egypt. **Maestro cards** might have problems. **Be sure to contact your bank before traveling!**

- ❏ Cash machines (ATMs) are common, especially in the main tourist areas, and will also be available within the conference venue

- ❏ Smaller vendors may not accept card payments or may apply a surcharge for card payments

- ❏ EUROS and USD are generally more easily exchanged at airports, money exchanges and in some hotels than other currencies.

COP27 Important Contacts

- **Emergency police: 122**

- **Tourist police: 126**

- **Medical Facilities - Sharm International Hospital**

  Al Salam Road
  8761142, Sharm El-Sheikh
  Tel: +20693660893

- **COP 27 Legal Protection Hotline,** which enables activists to get legal advice or legal help
  from Egyptian lawyers in case of legal trouble. This will be provided via email

FOR A DEEPER CHECKLIST →
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UJjg7XRXOTRfBFjjnoao1_FRvf3yqF7zaRRr9qMp7Nk/edit#

Any questions?

Email: hello@climatelegaldefense.org

www.climatelegaldefense.org/cop27