

Investigate Egypt's Former President Morsi's Death

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Global Research, June 28, 2019

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [United Nations](#)

Immediately after Dr Mohammed Morsi's death on the 17th of June 2019, a number of organisations and individuals had called for a thorough, independent investigation into the cause of his death while on trial in a Cairo court for espionage charges. The United Nations was one of the organisations that demanded an independent investigation. There is no indication that any attempt is being made currently through the UN or any other independent international outfit to ensure that the truth about Morsi's death is established.

It is imperative that a credible inquiry is conducted at once under the aegis of the UN. Because it is alleged that when he collapsed in court, no medical attention was accorded to Morsi for about 20 minutes, various quarters including his family have accused the authorities in Egypt of conspiring to murder him. In fact the President of Turkey, Recep Erdogan has been emphatic about describing Morsi's demise as "murder." Under international humanitarian law any sudden death in custody must be followed by an independent investigation.

Besides, Morsi who was incarcerated for six years, often in solitary confinement, had various ailments which could have impacted upon his death. He was suffering from diabetes and had liver and kidney problems. International human rights groups have maintained all along that Morsi was denied adequate medical attention — in spite of numerous requests from Morsi and his family.

His prison conditions were harsh and inhumane. He had only three family visits for brief periods during his entire incarceration. Visits from his lawyers were also severely restricted.

Morsi's mistreatment in prison was all the more unacceptable because the charges against him were politically motivated. A wide range of commentators and human rights advocates had made this observation. Some of them had pleaded with the Egyptian authorities to grant Morsi the standard rights due to a prisoner.

The authorities not only deprived him of his basic rights. It appears that they were determined to erase his role and his contribution to society. They did not want Egyptians especially the younger generation to show any appreciation of the fact that Morsi was the first democratically elected president of Egypt.

Surely, the manner in which the first democratically elected president of Egypt died in custody deserves to be investigated in an honest and transparent manner

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