

# Egypt: Concerns with draft Broadcast Law

Article 19 and the Arabic Network for Human Rights Information have voiced concerns with the draft Broadcast Law released by the Egyptian authorities. An analysis of the draft law conducted by Article 19 highlights these concerns, including the fact that the oversight body, the National Audiovisual Broadcasting Regulation Authority, would be controlled by the government.

The draft Broadcast Law was released in July 2008 and the Egyptian government has plans to present it to the People's Assembly. Article 19 and the Arabic Network for Human Rights Information's key concerns with the draft law, in addition to the lack of independence of the authority, are as follows:

- It requires not only broadcasters, but also companies which deal in broadcast equipment, to be licensed.
- It allocates broadcasting licences on the basis of the highest bidder, as opposed to public interest approach and fails to recognise community broadcasting as a third type of broadcaster
- It provides for excessive restrictions on broadcasting content.
- It fails to set out a framework of rules for regulating ownership concentration and for ensuring competition in the broadcasting sector.
- It provides only for heavy penalties, instead of putting in place a graduated system of sanctions for breach of the law, and fails to place appropriate conditions on the imposition of heavy penalties.

Article 19 and the Arabic Network for Human Rights Information are calling on the Egyptian authorities to amend the draft law before putting it to the People's Assembly so as to rectify these problems and to bring it into line with international standards in this area.

The submission is available in English [here](#) and in Arabic [here](#).

For further information on the broadcasting bill: <http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/96845>

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