

In Solidarity with Egyptian Women

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Women in Egypt had been at the forefront of the revolutionary overthrow of Hosni Mubarak. During the transition period following the revolution, as well as during Mohammed Morsi's rule, women were pushed out of the political sphere through conservative politics. They were also forced to go back home through sexual attacks in the streets. Those who hold the power in their hands once again chose to attack women's bodies in order to demoralize the opposition. Women's organizations have repeatedly stated that the street attacks on women were organized and systematic. The government, on the other hand, remained indifferent to these attacks, did not take any measures against them, and eventually went as far as to hold women responsible for sexual harassment and rape!

At the protests which started during the last days of June against the Morsi government, organized pro-Morsi men have increased the intensity of their attacks on women. Many women have been harassed, beaten, raped, and even kidnapped. Organized sexual violence towards women aims at discouraging women from participating in politics in the streets. Perpetrators know that, when women are in the streets voicing their demands for freedom, they threaten all kinds of authoritarian, oppressive, conservative, masculinist regimes.

Egyptian women won't leave the streets. They will continue to raise their demands and to challenge patriarchy. We stand together with our Egyptian sisters. We unite our power to reject sexual harassment and rape in the streets and to resist male and state violence. We are not leaving the streets!

We know that the army rule is not an alternative for women. We know that the army in Egypt, just like in Turkey, has been involved in violent attacks towards women. Women continue being at risk under the possible increase in street violence under the military rule.

We know that neither religious nor military regimes are safe for women. We also know that, in all attempts of suppressing the society, women are first to pay the price. There is no social change to celebrate if women are not welcome in the streets.

We want the necessary steps to be immediately taken to stop sexual harassment and rape towards women in the streets. Instead of women being stigmatized as immoral, we want the perpetrators to be punished. We want the Ministry of Health to respect the privacy of those women who were attacked.

We want Egypt to remain loyal to the international agreements which it is a party of, and to fulfill its obligations with regards to sexual harassment and rape accordingly.

We want women to be included in decision making processes immediately, and to speak for themselves in the new government following the military rule. We want women's representation at the parliament to be visible and strong.

We are in solidarity with our Egyptian sisters. We take strength from their struggle. Neither in Tahrir nor in Taksim women will leave the streets! We stand together in our fight for liberation!

Socialist Feminist Collective - Turkey

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P.S.

* <http://www.sosyalistfeministkolektif.org/english/556-in-solidarity-with-egyptian-women>