

Egypt recognizes only three religions

by UPI

CAIRO - Human Rights Watch joined an Egyptian group in calling on Egypt's government to provide more than three religious choices on identity documents. In a 98-page report released Monday, The Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights and Human Rights Watch said providing only three choices of religious identity discriminates against followers of the Bahai faith. All Egyptians must obtain a national identification card when they reach the age of 16. The card limits choice of religion to Islam, Christianity or Judaism. The report said providing only three choices for religion is based on Islamic law since there is no Egyptian law that requires a limit. Even though Egypt's Civil Status Law permits citizens to change or correct information on their identification documents, Islamic law prohibits any "repudiation" of the faith. Government officials have refused to recognize the religious conversion of any Muslim to another religion on identity documents.

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