

HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD 2020 Background document

Haytham Mohammadein, Hoda Abdelmoniem, Ibrahim Metwally Hegazy, Mahienour El-Massry, Mohamed El-Baqer, Mohamed Ramadan and Zyad El-Eleimy

The CCBE decided to grant the CCBE Human Rights Award 2020 to Egyptians lawyers Haytham Mohammadein, Hoda Abdelmoniem, Ibrahim Metwally Hegazy, Mahienour El-Massry, Mohamed El-Baqer, Mohamed Ramadan and Zyad El-Eleimy for their courage, determination and commitment to defending human rights in Egypt.

Haytham Mohammadein



Haytham Mohammadein is a human rights lawyer and labor activist. Mr. Mohammadein has been arrested on multiple occasions in the past for exercising his fundamental freedoms, including in January 2011 for participating in a protest; in September 2013 when on his way to attend a cement factory workers' strike; in April 2016 in light of his activism challenging the government's decision to transfer the sovereignty of the Tiran and Sanafir islands to Saudi Arabia; and in May 2018 for protesting metro ticket price hikes. Mr. Mohammadein's assets were also subject to freeze in January 2015; this measure is believed to have been taken as a form of reprisal because he was outspoken against the ousting of then former President Mohamed Morsi.

Most recently, Mr. Mohammadein was arrested on 12 May 2019 at the police station while serving probationary measures related to his prior conditional release in October 2018. He was missing for a few days before he finally surfaced at the State Security Prosecution on 16 May; he was subsequently ordered into pretrial detention in Case No. 741 of 2019. Since then, his pretrial detention has continued to be renewed and he remains in pretrial detention today.

➤ CCBE letters in his support:

- [Detention of lawyer Haytham Mohamadeen \(17/08/2018\)](#)
- [Detention of lawyer Haytham Mohamadeen \(02/06/2020\)](#)
- [Concerns regarding Egyptian human rights lawyers Gamal Eid, Mostafa Al Hassan, Haytham Mohammedin, and Malek Adly \(09/06/2016\)](#)
- [Concerns regarding the arbitrary arrest of human rights lawyer Mr Haitham Mohamadein \(24/09/2013\)](#)

Hoda Abdelmoniem



Hoda Abdelmoniem is a human rights lawyer, former member of the National Council for Human Rights and spokesperson for the Revolutionary Coalition of Egyptian Women, based in Cairo. She and her daughter Fadwa were asleep in their flat on 1 November at 1.30 am when the authorities came to arrest her. Her daughter reported that their apartment door was forced, nearly 20 officers stormed in, blindfolded her mother, did not allow her to take any belongings or medication (she has deep vein thrombosis), and did not allow her mother to speak to her or say goodbye. They had no warrant. They excluded Fadwa from the apartment as they searched it, leaving with suitcases mainly containing papers, books and CDs, and leaving the apartment trashed. After Hoda was held incommunicado in an unknown location for 3 weeks, her family issued a statement expressing concern about her “dire health and condition”.

Hoda had been providing legal assistance to the families of people who have been victims of enforced disappearances in Egypt. As part of her efforts to document cases of those forcibly disappeared, she volunteered as a consultant for the Egyptian Coordination for Rights and Freedoms. The Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms has documented a total of 1,719 cases of enforced disappearance between August 2015 and June 2019. The organisation found that, of 647 individuals who disappeared and later appeared in front of prosecutors, 287 of them were brought before the SSSP. The organisation also alerted the prosecutor to their situation. However, in none did the SSSP investigate the allegations.

➤ CCBE letters in her support:

- [Arrest of lawyers Hoda Abdelmoniem and Mohamed Abu Horira \(14/11/2018\)](#)

Ibrahim Metwally Hegazy



Ibrahim Metwally Hegazy is a lawyer and a father. His eldest son disappeared on 8 July 2013, during the bloody repression of public gatherings in Rabea Al-Adawiya and Nahda squares in Cairo. He specialises in the defence of fundamental rights and is a member of the Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms. After the disappearance of his son, he cofounded the Egyptian Association of Families of the Disappeared established in 2016 (EAFD) and represents the families of victims of enforced disappearance in Egypt.

Ibrahim Metwally Hegazy contributed to the preparation of the complaint files that led the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances to investigate numerous cases. He has defended hundreds of families of victims of enforced disappearance in Egypt, despite the risks posed to his own security and has contributed significantly to raising awareness about those practices. In addition, Ibrahim Metwally Hegazy is known to have provided legal advice to the family of Giulio Regeni, an Italian student from Cambridge University

who disappeared in Cairo in January 2016 and whose body was found with traces of torture. The student had come to Egypt to research trade union activities in that country before he disappeared.

On 10 September 2017, as he was about to fly to Geneva to meet with the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, Ibrahim Metwally Hegazy was arrested at Cairo airport on suspicion of “financing and directing an organisation created illegally and disseminating information undermining national security” (i.e. the EAFD). His whereabouts remained unknown until the evening of 12 September when the “Stop Disappearance”

campaign reported that he had been found in custody at the State Security Prosecutor's Office (SSSP) in Al- Tagammo' al-Khamis, a suburb of Cairo. The lawyer was subjected to two days of physical and psychological torture, including electrocution. He was 52 years old and suffered from chronic back pain. On 14th October 2019, Ibrahim Metwally Hegazy received a release order after two years of detention in despicable conditions. However, he remained in detention until he was charged in a new case (n° 1470/2019) on 5th November 2019. He was charged with “being part of a terrorist group” and “financing of a terrorist group”. The State Security Prosecutor ordered his preventive detention for 15 days.

These new charges appear to be a mean of circumventing the maximum of two years for pre-trial detention prescribed by Egyptian law. He is currently still being held in Aqrab prison, where he has reported poor detention conditions, lack of adequate food and lack of adequate medical tests for his anemia.

➤ CCBE letters in his support:

- [Concerns regarding the situation of lawyers El Massry Amr Imam Hegazy and El Baqer \(24/09/2020\)](#)
- [Detention of lawyers El Baqer Metwally Hegazy el Massry and Ramadan \(25/11/2019\)](#)
- [Continued detention of lawyer Ibrahim Metwaly Hegazy \(27/09/2019\)](#)
- [Continued detention of lawyer Ibrahim Metwaly Hegazy \(17/08/2018\)](#)
- [Concerns regarding the detention of the Egyptian lawyer Ibrahim Metawly Hegazy \(31/10/2017\)](#)

Mahienour El-Massry



Mahienour El-Massry is an Egyptian human rights lawyer and an activist involved in the political life of Alexandria since the mid-2000s. Several times detained under the regime of deposed President Hosni Mubarak, she is one of the figures of the uprising that overthrew him in 2011. She continued her struggle after the “Arab Spring” and was again condemned under the Morsi and Al-Sisi regimes.

She was last arrested on 22 September 2019 after attending interrogations of demonstrators. She remains imprisoned in Al Qanatar Women's Prison. She was accused of “belonging to an illegal group”, “publishing fake news” and “abusing social media”. Her pre-trial detention was renewed every 15 days “for the purpose of the investigation” on 20th October 2019, 3rd November 2019, 18th November 2019 and again on 11 February 2020 for 45 days.

Mahienour El-Massry is the winner of the 2014 Ludovic-Trarieux Prize, awarded annually to a lawyer who has distinguished himself in the defence of human rights.

Often described as a voice of the revolution and a defender of women's rights, her activism covers a wide range of activities : human rights, student rights, women's rights, workers' strikes, legal aid, police brutality, housing for the poor, corruption, trials against the military, heritage preservation, the right to public space, state land reclamation for the poor, climate change, the rights of street children or Syrian refugees.

➤ CCBE letters in her support:

- [Concerns regarding the situation of lawyers El Massry Amr Imam Hegazy and El Baqer \(24/09/2020\)](#)
- [Detention of lawyers El Baqer Metwally Hegazy el Massry and Ramadan \(25/11/2019\)](#)
- [Arrest of lawyer Mahienour El Massry \(27/09/2019\)](#)
- [Concerns regarding the detention against lawyer Mahienour El Massry \(20/12/2017\)](#)
- [Concerns regarding Mahienour El-Massry's upheld prison sentence \(27/10/2015\)](#)
- [Concerns regarding the sentencing of Ms Mahienour El-Massry, a human rights lawyer \(22/06/2015\)](#)

Mohamed El-Baqer



Mohamed El-Baqer is a human rights lawyer and Director of Adalah Center for Rights and Freedoms. On 29 September 2019, Mr. El-Baqer was arrested at the State Security Prosecution premises while he was attending an investigation session with his client, who had been arrested earlier in the morning that same day.

Mr. El-Baqer was subsequently accused by the State Security Prosecution, under Criminal Case No. 1356 of 2019, of potential charges, including “belonging to a terrorist group with knowledge of its terrorist objectives,” “committing a funding crime with knowledge of said-group’s terrorist objectives,” “broadcasting, spreading, and publishing false news and rumors with an intent to disturb public security and instill terror among people”, and “misusing social media to broadcast, spread, and publish false news leading to a disturbance of public security.” He is being held in pre-trial detention at

maximum security wing 2 of Tora Prison and his pre-trial detention has continued to be renewed. Although he was able to meet with his legal counsel prior to Covid-19-related restrictions, Mr. El-Baqer has previously been denied the right to have private meetings with his attorney; the meetings were also limited in time to about 10 minutes.

While in custody, Mr. El-Baqer has been subject to ill treatment and he continues to be held in poorly conditions.

➤ CCBE letters in his support:

- [Concerns regarding the situation of lawyers El Massry Amr Imam Hegazy and El Baqer \(24/09/2020\)](#)
- [Detention of lawyers El Baqer Metwally Hegazy el Massry and Ramadan \(25/11/2019\)](#)
- [Detention of lawyer Mohammed El Baqer \(21/10/2019\)](#)

Mohamed Ramadan



Mohamed Ramadan is a human rights lawyer whose work involves legally representing human rights defenders.

Mr. Ramadan has previously been arrested and prosecuted for his human rights work. In April 2017, Mr. Ramadan was sentenced in absentia to a ten year jail term over his social media posts on accusations of insulting the president, misusing social media, and inciting violence per the country’s Counter-terrorism Law; he was also sentenced to a five year house arrest and a five year social media ban. His appeal in this case is still pending while the Supreme Constitutional Court reviews a separate claim involving the constitutionality of the Counter-terrorism Law.

More recently, Mr. Ramadan was arrested on 10 December 2018 and accused of belonging to a terrorist organisation, inciting terrorist ideas, and possessing yellow vests to call for protests against those in power; his arrest took place shortly after the yellow vest demonstrations in France and after he posted a photo of himself wearing a yellow vest on his personal social media account. He was held in an undisclosed location until 11 December, when he was ordered into pretrial detention. He continues to be held in pretrial detention today. In detention, Mr. Ramadan has been subject to physical assault, including at least one incident in which he was beaten in the stomach by a prison guard.

➤ CCBE letters in his support:

- [Detention of lawyers El Baqer Metwally Hegazy el Massry and Ramadan \(25/11/2019\)](#)
- [Detention of lawyer Mohamed Ramadan \(03/09/2019\)](#)

- [Arrest of lawyer Mohamed Ramadan \(14/02/2019\)](#)
- [Concerns regarding the conviction of Egyptian human rights lawyer Mohamed Ramadan \(03/05/2017\)](#)

Zyad El-Eleimy



Zyad El-Eleimy is a lawyer and former parliamentarian in Egypt. On 25 June 2019, he was arrested in Cairo and brought to the State Security Prosecution. On the same day, others were also arrested – including political campaigners and journalists - and were accused of leading a plot to "bring down the state." Mr. el-Eleimy is part of a group of individuals seeking to identify potential candidates to take part in the upcoming parliamentary elections in Egypt.

Mr. el-Eleimy is now a defendant in Case No. 930 of 2019; he is held in pre-trial detention and faces potential charges of helping a terrorist organisation to achieve its objectives and spreading false news on social media to cause strife and to overthrow the government. He is currently being detained in Tora prison. He suffers from asthma, diabetes, and high blood pressure and his health has deteriorated in detention.

➤ CCBE letters in his support:

- [Continued detention and medical condition of lawyer Zyad El Elaimy \(17/08/2020\)](#)
- [Sentencing of lawyer Zyad El Elaimy \(16/04/2020\)](#)