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The UIA Urges to Put an End to All Forms of Harassment against Egyptian Lawyer and Activist Mahienour El-Massry

The UIA has learned with deep concern of the recent detention of Mahienour El-Massry, prominent Egyptian human rights lawyer and activist, and recipient of the 2014 International Human Rights Award Ludovic Trarieux.

According to the information received, on November 18, 2017 the Montazah Misdemeanour Court in Alexandria ordered Mahienour El-Massry's detention, alleging that in June of this year, Ms. El-Massry engaged in an illegal protest against the Egyptian government's decision to transfer two Red Sea islands to Saudi Arabia. According to her lawyer, however, Ms. El-Massry, who was detained with another activist, denies the charges and asserted that there was no evidence of a protest taking place.

Mahienour El-Massry will reportedly remain in detention until the next hearing in her case, which is scheduled for December 30.

Ms. El-Massry is a human rights activist and lawyer, well-known for her unwavering commitment -- throughout all the regimes in power in Egypt in recent years -- to the respect and promotion of the rule of law and fundamental rights and freedoms. As a result of her commitment, she has been repeatedly targeted by Egyptian authorities and subject to arbitrary arrest, prosecution and conviction.

The UIA denounces, once again, the recurrent harassment, including at the judiciary level, which Ms. El-Massry faces and urges Egypt to immediately put an end to such practice.

The UIA calls upon Egyptian authorities to guarantee in all circumstances Ms. El-Massry's physical and psychological safety, and to take all necessary measures to ensure the full respect of Ms. El-Massry's rights of due process, including the right to defence by an attorney of her choosing and the right to a fair trial.

The UIA has reason to believe that charges against Ms. El-Massry are solely aimed at curtailing the peaceful exercise of her freedom of expression and assembly, as well as her legitimate human rights activities. **If so, all charges against Ms. El-Massry must be dropped immediately, and she should be immediately and unconditionally released.**

The UIA shall continue to monitor the case of Mahienour El-Massry's, as well as the situation of all human rights lawyers in Egypt.

More about the UIA

UIA, as a global and multi-cultural organization, facilitates professional development and international exchange of information and ideas, promotes the rule of law, defends the independence and freedom of lawyers worldwide, and emphasizes friendship, collegiality and networking among members.

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