



The UIA Institute for the Rule of Law

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Paris, February 27, 2020

H.E. Mr. Abdel Fattah El Sisi

President of the Arab Republic of Egypt

Office of the President

Al Ittihadia Palace

Cairo

Arab Republic of Egypt

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Excellency,

RE: Arbitrary Arrest and Continued Arrest of Lawyer Mahienour El-Massry

I am writing to you in my capacity as Director General of the Institute for the Rule of Law of the International Association of Lawyers (UIA-IROL). The mission of the UIA-IROL is to promote the Rule of Law and support and defend, in particular (1) lawyers and human rights defenders who are persecuted in the exercise of their professions, (2) the independence of the legal and judicial professions, and (3) the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, especially in defense of human rights.

We express our deepest concern regarding the continued detention of Mahienour El-Massry, who was the recipient of the 2014 Ludovic Trarieux Award for her contribution to the defense of human rights. Former UIA President Mr. Issouf Baadhio, had written to you with respect to her arbitrary detention on September 26, 2019, but unfortunately, to date, UIA has not received any reply.

Since then, the Supreme Public Prosecution has repeatedly renewed the preventive detention of Ms. El-Massry. The charges against her appear spurious and unfounded by fact.

We strongly renew the concerns UIA communicated earlier, regarding the continued detention of Ms. El-Massry and other colleagues illegally detained for performing their professional legal duties and/or for exercising their fundamental rights to freedom of expression and association. Under both Egyptian and international law, these activities are protected. We urge the Egyptian authorities to respect fundamental freedoms and human rights and, as a matter of priority, to take all necessary measures to protect those who, like Ms. El-Massry, defend them, as notably required by the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders and in the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers: "Where the security of lawyers is threatened as a result of discharging their functions, they shall be adequately safeguarded by the authorities" - Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, Principle 17.

UIA-IROL

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We also reiterate UIA's requests of November 27, 2017 and September 26, 2019, for a meeting with the concerned authorities, including His Excellency, the Minister of Justice, to discuss the protection of lawyers.

On behalf of the UIA-IROL, I urge you to take all actions necessary, within the limits of separation of powers, to release Ms. El-Massry immediately and ensure she and other lawyers similarly situated are afforded due process.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully yours,



Jacqueline R. SCOTT
Director General - UIA-IROL

C.c.

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