



Sentencing of Ludovic Trarieux Prize Winner

Mahienour El-Massry



The Ludovic Trarieux Award Jury deplores the sentencing of Mahienour El-Massry, Human Rights Lawyer and 2014 Ludovic Trarieux Prize recipient

On 31 May 2015, El Raml Misdemeanour Court of Appeal in Alexandria sentenced human rights defenders Ms Mahienour El-Massry, Mr Youssef Shaban, and Mr Loay Mohamed Abdel Rahman to one year and three months' imprisonment.

In this case, while the defendants had gone to the police station to render legal assistance to activists who had been arrested after clashes between pro- and anti-Morsi factions, they were accused of storming the Al-Raml police station in Alexandria and attacking its officers. The defendants also were accused of torching Muslim Brotherhood headquarters in March 2013.

This most recent Court decision constitutes yet further evidence of the continued judicial harassment against Ms. El-Massry, a human rights lawyer known for her activism in favor of judicial independence and prisoners' rights, organizing peaceful protests, support activities for political prisoners and using social media to denounce human rights violations.

We remain profoundly concerned about Mahienour El-Massry and other human rights lawyers who face continuous harassment simply for the exercise of their mandate as citizens' rights defenders.

We recall the valuable role of lawyers and human rights defenders in the promotion and defense of the rule of law and in society at large. This role must be recognized and their work supported and promoted in line with international human rights law.

We remind Egyptian authorities of their obligation, under customary international law and international principles, and as required explicitly in the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers (particularly Principles 16 and 17), to adequately protect and support lawyers practicing in Egypt.

Consequently, we urge the Egyptian authorities to reconsider the convictions and sentences imposed on Ms. El-Massry and her colleagues, as they appear to be aimed solely at curtailing their human rights activities and related to their legitimate work as lawyers. Mahienour El-Massry, Youssef Shaban, Mohamed Ramadan and Loay Mohamed Abdel Rahman should be immediately released and their prison sentences reversed.

We also urge the Egyptian authorities to take all necessary steps to immediately put an end to all forms of persecution, including at the judicial level, against Ms. Mahienour El-Massry and all human rights lawyers and defenders in Egypt in the exercise of their profession.

The Jury will continue to closely monitor this situation and alert the legal profession on the situation described above.

Amsterdam, June 12, 2015

**Institut droits de l'homme des Avocats Européens -
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