

21 November 2017

## **Egypt: Human rights defender Mahienour El-Masry remanded**

On 18 November 2017, the Alexandria Misdemeanor Court ordered the remand of human rights defender **Mahienour El-Masry**, pending charges in relation to a peaceful protest over the Egyptian Government's failure to implement decisions of the judiciary.

[Mahienour El-Masry](#) is a human rights defender based in Alexandria who works to promote judicial independence and prisoners' rights by organising peaceful protests, raising awareness using social media, and organising support for political prisoners in the form of solidarity events and bail fundraising.

On 18 November 2017, the Alexandria Misdemeanor Court ordered the remand of Mahienour El-Masry and co-defendant **Moatassem Medhat**, pending charges in relation to their alleged involvement in a peaceful protest in June 2017 regarding the Egyptian Government's failure to implement certain decisions of the judiciary. The two human rights defenders, along with three others who were not detained, are being charged with “insulting the President of the Republic”, committing “thuggery”, and illegally protesting. Mahienour El-Masry was attending a court session when the order was made and the decision was implemented immediately.

Mahienour El-Masry was charged with two other human rights defenders, Moatassem Medhat and [Asmaa Naiem](#), and two activists, Waleed Al-Omari and Ziad Abu Al-Fadel. Despite the fact that hundreds attended the protest, it is believed that Mahienour El-Masry, Moatassem Medhat and Asmaa Naiem were targeted specifically for their work in relation to human rights. The next hearing is scheduled for 30 December 2017.

In April 2016, during a sweep of more than 300 arrests in Cairo, Alexandria and other governorates, Egyptian security forces arrested several human rights defenders and transferred them to different police stations. The sweep of arrests was a reaction to a series of demonstrations held on 25 April 2016.

Mahienour El-Masry has faced continued harassment from Egyptian authorities, including a [two year sentence](#) in 2014 for taking part a protest, subsequently reduced to [6 months](#), a [preventative detention order](#) in 2015, and a [one year and three month](#) sentence upheld the same year in relation to a sit-in on police aggression.

### **Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Egypt to:**

1. Immediately drop all charges against Mahienour El-Masry, Moatassem Medhat, and Asmaa Naiem as it is believed that they are solely motivated by their legitimate and peaceful work in defence of human rights;

2. Immediately and unconditionally release Mahienour El-Masry and Moatassem Medhat, as Front Line Defenders believes that they are being held solely as a result of their human rights work in Egypt;

3. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Egypt are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.