

Nadeem Center forcibly shut down Human Rights groups persevere in their advocacy despite escalating repression

The undersigned organizations unequivocally condemn the security forces' raid Yesterday, February 9th 2017, on the Nadeem Center for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence and Torture. Founded in 1994, the Nadeem Center is pivotal to the Egyptian human rights movement; it is the only center to provide specialized support for the spiraling numbers of men and women who are victimized by torture and sexual violence in Egypt's prisons and detention centers. The raid represents a tightening of the regime's stranglehold on civil society, as it lashes out with renewed wish to fully eradicate rights organizations like Nadeem Center - the last refuge for victims of the current regime.

Security forces forcibly shut down and sealed the center's headquarters and clinic, executing an order to close the center's clinic pursuant to a decree issued last [February](#) by the Free Treatment Directorate of the Health Ministry. The center appealed the order after security forces raided the premises on February 18, 2016; the appeal is still pending. Although the order was issued for the clinic, which occupies one apartment, the security forces exceeded the bounds of the order, and the law, by sealing two other apartments used by the center. They further detained the guard on the property and interrogated him before his release.

The assault and arbitrary closure of the Nadeem Center is likely not the last of the current regime's reprisals against civil society, especially those organizations defending human rights. The first of these came in November 2014, just days after the current President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi assumed office, when in the Ministry of Social Solidarity attempted to coerce organizations to register under Law 84/2002, the repressive law regulating the operation of civic associations. Only a few months later, the regime's retaliatory campaign became clear in 2011, with the revival of [Case No. 173, known as the Foreign](#)

[Funding Case](#), which is being used as a pretext to liquidate Egyptian civil society.

2016 and first two months of 2017 marked a concerted intensification of the regime's assault on civil society, with relentless violations intended to obstruct the fundamental operation of the most prominent Egyptian rights organizations, including asset freezes for several organizations: [the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies](#), the Egyptian Center for Right to Education, [Andalus Institute for Tolerance and Anti Violence Studies](#), [Nazra for Feminist Studies](#), [the Arab Organization for Penal Reform](#), Hisham Mubarak Law Center, and Lawyers for Justice and Peace. The personal assets of the directors of the aforementioned organizations, along with rights advocates [Gamal Eid](#) and [Hossam Bahgat](#), were frozen as well.

In connection with the same foreign funding case, more than eleven rights advocates have been [banned from travel](#) based on orders from the investigating judge, such as Negad el-Borai who was banned from traveling to Jordan earlier this year, on January 26. In December of last year, the Egyptian government escalated the campaign against rights organizations and human rights defenders when security forces raided the home of [rights defender and lawyer Azza Soliman](#) pursuant to an arrest warrant issued by Judge Abd al-Megid, one of the investigating judges in the foreign funding case. This was the first arrest of a leader of an Egyptian rights organization in connection with the case.

The persistent legal harassment—the closure of the Nadeem Center will not be the last incident—will not deter Egyptian rights organizations from steadfastly exposing the current regime's abuses and its violations of citizens' fundamental human rights. We will continue to conduct research, monitor, and raise awareness in service of human rights principles and in defense of those victimized by draconian laws designed to forcefully shutdown the public sphere and all outlets for peaceful expression of opinion.

Signatory organizations

1. Nazra for Feminist Studies
2. ADALAH Center for Rights & Freedoms "ACRF"

3. Al-Haqqanya Foundation of Rights and freedoms
4. Andalus Institute for Tolerance and Anti-Violence Studies
5. Arab Network for Human Rights Information
6. Arab Organization for Penal Reform
7. Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression
8. Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies
9. Center for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance
10. Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms
11. Hesham Mubarak Law Center
12. The Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement
13. The Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights
14. The Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights
15. The Land Center for Human Rights