



Statement – 29 November 2019 - <http://nazra.org/en/node/665>

On International Women Human Rights Defenders Day... The Light they Send Won't Fade

On the occasion of International Women Human Rights Defenders Day that is celebrated on 29th November of each year as a tribute for their struggle and the infringements they encounter based on their activism and gender. Nazra for Feminist Studies salutes all women human rights defenders and women human rights defenders of the Middle East and North Africa region, and values all their efforts and the risks they endure to defend a better future for their countries and their women. We particularly salute women human rights defenders in Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Lebanon, Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Palestine for their fights in the midst of pressing contexts of mobilization and revolution. Yet, they were able to make accomplishments for women that would not have been possible if not for their sacrifices.

On this day, Nazra pays respect to all women human rights defenders in the history of Egypt with specificity to revolutionary women and girls of January 25, 2011, who fought hard through their different positions to defend women's right to participate safely in the public sphere. Women human rights defenders played important part in the history of the Egyptian Feminist Movement. Their contributions since 25 January Revolution up to this moment have constituted a different realization to women's roles and breaking stereotypes. However, this came with a price in which their freedom is restricted and their security and bodily safety are threatened.

Within such context of continuous crackdown on rights and freedoms and backlashes against women human rights defenders.

On International Women Human Rights Defenders Day, Nazra dedicates its campaign this year to Egyptian women human rights defenders "Asmaa Dabees", "Esraa Abdel Fattah", "Mahienour Al-Masry" and "Solafa Magdy", who have been subject to enforced disappearance and unlawful arrests. In addition, they are being prosecuted by Supreme State Security for their activism and they are still in custody.

The light that the feminist activist, Asmaa Dabees, journalist activist, Esraa Abdel Fattah, lawyer Mahienour Al-Masry, and journalist Solafa Magdy have sent, as women human rights defenders, and inspired many girls, cannot fade. Nonetheless, the violent backlash witnessed

against them has conveyed fear that obstructs the ability of women human rights defenders to carry on their work and threatens women's participation in the public sphere. Consequently, the Egyptian Feminist Movement as well as the International Feminist Movement refuse to be silenced for revealing these violations.

Throughout the day, we will be publishing the profiles of Asmaa, Esraa, Mahienour and Solafa to highlight their work and the violations they were subject to as well as calling for their freedom.

The campaign is launched on Facebook and Twitter through the following hashtag #16Days
#AshutteredPublicSphere #InternationalWomenHumanRightsDefendersDay
#FreeAsmaaDabee
#FreeEsraa
#FreeMahienour
#FreeSolafa

Long live women human rights defenders' struggle ... in Egypt and Everywhere.