

21 May 2014

Conviction and Detention of Women Human Rights Defender Mahienour El-Massry

On 20 May 2014, the Sidi Gaber Misdemeanor Court in Alexandria upheld the sentence of women human rights defender **Mahienour El-Massry** and several human rights defenders and detained her on charges of unauthorized protest and attacking police officers during the Khaled Said murder retrial on 2 December 2013.

Mahienour El-Massry is a prominent women human rights defender and lawyer, who mainly works in the governorate of Alexandria on Syrian and Palestinian refugee issues, labor and student rights. She also works on documenting and exposing human rights violations committed against women and human rights defenders, as well as being the coordinator and spokesperson of No to Military Trials against Civilians in Alexandria.

The Sidi Gaber Misdemeanor Court upheld the sentences of women human rights defender Mahienour El-Massry along with Loay Mohamed Abdel Rahman, Omar Abdel Aziz Hussein, Islam Mohamed Ahmed, Nasser Abulhamad Ibrahim, Hassan Moustafa, Moussa Hussein and Hassan Al-Sayad to two years in prison, along with a fine of 50,000 Egyptian Pounds (approximately EUR 5,127). The sentence was originally handed down by the El-Manshia Misdemeanor Court in Alexandria on 2 January 2014. Currently, Mahienour El-Massry, Loay Mohamed Abdel Rahman, Omar Abdel Aziz Hussein, Islam Mohamed Ahmed and Nasser Abulhamad Ibrahim are detained following the Sidi Gaber Misdemeanor today.

Nazra for Feminist Studies condemns the prolonged judicial harassment of Mahienour El-Massry and the aforementioned human rights defenders, and believes that it is directly related to their legitimate activities in the defense of human rights.

Nazra for Feminist Studies calls on the African Commission to urge the Egyptian authorities to:

1. Immediately release the aforementioned human rights defenders.
2. Quash their convictions that are based on a Protest and Public Assembly Law and drop all charges stemming from the legitimate exercise of the rights of freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.
3. Cease the harassment and persecution of human rights defenders and ensure that all human rights defenders in Egypt are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities free from persecution, arbitrary arrest, judicial harassment and physical violence.
4. Ensure that the Protest and Public Assembly Law is fully compliant with relevant international standards and the newly passed Egyptian constitution.
5. Guarantee the right of women human rights defenders to engage in human rights work and take measures to ensure their protection before the law and in society.

Nazra for Feminist Studies (<http://nazra.org/en>) is a group that is based in Egypt with special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC). Nazra aims to build an Egyptian feminist movement, believing that feminism and gender are political and social issues affecting freedom and development in all societies. Nazra aims to mainstream these values in both public and private spheres.