

Advocacy dossier

Hoda Abdel-Moneim

هدى عبد المنعم

Detained (pretrial) **Egypt**

Hoda Abdel-Moneim is a retired Egyptian human rights lawyer, mother, and former member of the National Council for Human Rights. Arrested in 2018, she was held in prolonged pretrial detention, sentenced by an emergency court, then re-detained after completing her full term. She is now on trial in two further cases before a terrorism circuit.

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The case at a glance

Hoda Abdel-Moneim is a retired Egyptian human rights lawyer, mother, and former member of the National Council for Human Rights. Arrested in 2018, she was held in prolonged pretrial detention, sentenced by an emergency court, then re-detained after completing her full term. She is now on trial in two further cases before a terrorism circuit.

Status **Detained (pretrial)**	Arrested **31 Oct 2023**	Country **Egypt**
Sentence Five years in prison, asset freeze, travel ban, and five years of police probation. Sentence completed 31 October 2023; immediately re-detained on nearly identical charges.		
Charges Joining a terrorist organization Inciting harm to the national economy		

What we ask

We call on the authorities to:

01 Release Hoda Abdel-Moneim immediately and unconditionally.

02 Drop all charges related to the peaceful exercise of fundamental rights.

03 Ensure unrestricted access to legal counsel, family, and adequate medical care while in detention.

04 Provide Hoda Abdel-Moneim with immediate, independent medical evaluation and the full treatment that condition requires, including transfer to an independent civilian hospital if necessary.

05 Immediately lift the travel ban imposed on Hoda Abdel-Moneim and on any family members affected by the same order.

06 Immediately unfreeze the personal and organisational accounts of Hoda Abdel-Moneim.

02

Documented violations

Each violation and the international standard it breaks.

Arbitrary detention International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9

Asset freeze UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Article 13

Denial of family visits UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules), Rule 58

Denial of medical care UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules), Rules 24 to 27

Enforced disappearance International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, Article 2
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 9, 16

Inhumane detention conditions International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 10
UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules)

Judicial harassment UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Articles 9, 12

Prolonged pretrial detention International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9(3)

Travel ban International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 12

Trial before an exceptional court International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 14

Unfair trial International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 14

03

How the case unfolded

2014

Travel ban imposed

Travel ban imposed

Following her participation in an international conference where she spoke publicly about enforced disappearance in Egypt, Huda was placed under a travel ban and received online threats.

November 2018

Family visit denied

Family and lawyers repeatedly barred from visits

Since her arrest, Abdelmonem's family and lawyers have faced restrictions and repeated bans on visitation.

1 November 2018

Arrest

Arrested in pre-dawn raid

State security forces raided Abdel-Moneim's home without a warrant, ransacked it for hours, blindfolded her, and took her to an unknown location. She was forcibly disappeared for 21 days.

1 November 2018

Start of enforced disappearance

Forcibly disappeared for 21 days

subjected to enforced disappearance for 21 days, during which she was denied contact with her lawyers or family

22 November 2018

Reappearance in custody

Appeared before prosecution

After approximately three weeks of enforced disappearance, Abdel-Moneim was brought before the State Security Prosecution in Case No. 1552 of 2018 (State Security Emergency), in a state of severe exhaustion. She remained denied access to a lawyer and her family.

31 January 2019

Transfer between places of detention

Transfer to Qanater Prison

After three months in unknown locations, Huda was transferred to Qanater Prison, where she was held in near-total isolation for 23 hours a day.

5 March 2023

Conviction

Emergency court sentences to 5 years

An Emergency State Security Court sentenced her to five years in prison for joining a terrorist group; acquitted of financing charges. She was also placed on the terrorism list.

31 October 2023

Re-arrest

Sentence completed; immediately re-detained

On the day her five-year sentence ended, Abdel-Moneim was re-detained under Case No. 730 of 2020 on nearly identical charges.

31 October 2023

Charge filed

Questioned in Case 730 of 2020 on the same accusations

Prosecutors questioned her in Case 730 of 2020 on the same accusations as in her first case.

26 November 2023

Medical care denied

Medical transfer order not implemented

Prison authorities failed to implement a Public Prosecution order to transfer Abdel-Moneim to a prison hospital despite her deteriorating health.

2024

Medical care denied

Severe health deterioration

Her health deteriorated seriously in detention, and she does not receive adequate medical care.

November 2024

Charge filed

Questioned in a further case, Case 800 of 2019

Prosecutors questioned her in another case, Case 800 of 2019, on the same accusations.

8 December 2024

Hearing

Trial opens in Case 730 of 2020

Her trial in Case 730 of 2020 opened on charges of joining a terrorist group and taking part in a criminal agreement, offences that can carry life imprisonment.

11 December 2024

Referral to trial

Case 800 of 2019 referred to trial

Case No. 800 of 2019, in which she is a defendant, was referred to trial.

13 August 2025

Complaint filed

Family files complaint with the National Council for Human Rights

The family also filed a complaint with the National Council for Human Rights on 13 August 2025.

23 August 2025

Medical emergency

Heart attack in detention

She suffered a heart attack in detention. Her family and lawyer were not told at the time.

30 August 2025

Medical emergency

Second heart attack in detention

She suffered a second heart attack in detention, a week after the first.

11 February 2026

Hearing

First hearing in Case No. 800/2019

Abdel-Moneim appeared before the Second Terrorism Circuit of Badr Criminal Court, informed the judge she had been bedridden for fifteen days, and requested exemption from future transfers. Case adjourned to 10 May.

10 May 2026

Hearing

Hearing in Case No. 800 of 2019

A hearing was scheduled on this date before the Second Terrorism Circuit in Badr. Its outcome is not known.

August 2026

Detention conditions and health

Unable to walk unassisted; court refuses to excuse her from hearings

Amnesty International reported that her health had deteriorated so far that she could not walk unassisted, and that the court had refused requests to excuse her from attending hearings in person and let her lawyer represent her, as Egyptian law allows. She shares a cell in a corridor without sunlight and is kept out of the yard when other detainees are there.

14 September 2026

Hearing

Trial in Case 730 of 2020 adjourned to 23 November 2026

In Case 730 of 2020, the Second Terrorism Circuit adjourned her trial to 23 November 2026 to open the seized evidence.

04

The full story

Update, 12 November 2026: this record was checked on 12 November 2026. Hoda Abdel-Moneim remains detained at 10th of Ramadan prison and on trial in two cases on similar terrorism charges; in August 2026 Amnesty International reported that she could not walk unassisted and that the court had refused to excuse her from hearings. Her trial in Case 730 of 2020 was adjourned to 23 November 2026. She had volunteered as a legal adviser with the Egyptian Coordination for Rights and Freedoms, whose director Ezzat Ghoneim was also prosecuted.

Background and Work

Hoda Abdel-Moneim built her career on the principle that everyone deserves legal representation. Over decades of practice, she defended victims of abuse, provided legal aid without regard to political affiliation, and worked to uphold the rule of law in Egypt's increasingly constrained civic space.

She held respected positions within the legal community: membership in the Egyptian Lawyers Syndicate, a seat on the National Council for Human Rights, and a consultancy role with the Egyptian Coordination for Rights and Freedoms. Her work was grounded in Egyptian law and international human rights standards, and she took on cases that others found too risky or politically sensitive.

During the January 2011 uprising, Abdel-Moneim became a visible figure in the protests. She led women's marches into Tahrir Square and remained in the square for eighteen days, calling for democratic reform and respect for fundamental freedoms. Her participation in that historic moment would later be cited as evidence against her.

By 2018, her health had deteriorated to the point that she retired from active legal practice. She was no longer taking cases. She was at home when security forces arrived to arrest her.

Arrest and Enforced Disappearance

On 1 November 2018, state security forces raided Abdel-Moneim's home in the early hours of the morning. No warrant was presented. She was blindfolded and taken to an unknown location. For approximately three weeks, her family received no information about her whereabouts or her legal status.

This period constitutes enforced disappearance under international law. She was eventually brought before the prosecution and formally added to Case No. 1552 of 2018, a State Security Emergency case. The charges against her included joining a terrorist organization and inciting harm to the national economy.

Prolonged Pretrial Detention and Emergency Court Sentencing

Abdel-Moneim remained in pretrial detention for more than four years. On 5 March 2023, the Emergency State Security Court sentenced her to five years in prison on charges of joining a terrorist group. She was acquitted of financing-related charges.

Emergency State Security Courts operate under Egypt's Emergency Law. Defendants tried before these courts have no right to appeal. The

proceedings in Abdel-Moneim's case relied on vague accusations and offered none of the safeguards required by international fair trial standards.

In addition to imprisonment, the court placed her on Egypt's "terrorism list," triggering automatic asset freezes, a travel ban, and five years of police probation to begin after her release. She completed her five-year sentence on 31 October 2023.

Re-Detention and Double Jeopardy

On the day her sentence ended, Abdel-Moneim was not released. Instead, she was immediately re-detained under Case No. 730 of 2020. The charges were nearly identical to those for which she had already served five years: joining an unnamed terrorist organization.

She was later added to a second pending case, No. 800 of 2019, which was referred to trial in December 2024. She now faces prosecution in two separate cases based on the same underlying allegations, a practice known in Egypt as "rotation" or "recycling" of cases.

This violates the principle of *ne bis in idem*, the prohibition against being tried or punished twice for the same offense. That principle is enshrined in Articles 454 and 455 of Egypt's Code of Criminal Procedure and protected under international human rights law. Abdel-Moneim's continued detention after completing her sentence is therefore arbitrary and unlawful.

Trial Proceedings in Case No. 800 of 2019

On 11 February 2026, Abdel-Moneim appeared before the Second Terrorism Circuit of the Badr Criminal Court for the first hearing in Case No. 800 of 2019. She and other defendants were held behind a glass barrier. The court did not conduct meaningful questioning.

Abdel-Moneim told the judge that she had been bedridden for fifteen days due to severe illness and was unable to move. She requested exemption from future court transfers, asking that her husband and lawyer represent her in her absence. She explained that the repeated transfers from the Tenth of Ramadan Rehabilitation and Correctional Center to the Badr court complex caused her extreme physical hardship. The court adjourned the case to 10 May 2026.

She is also on trial in Case No. 730 of 2020 before the same Second Terrorism Circuit. On 14 September 2026 that trial was adjourned to 23 November 2026.

Health Conditions and Medical Neglect

She suffers from chronic deep vein thrombosis, pulmonary embolisms, high blood pressure, and acute joint inflammation. During her detention, she has experienced two heart attacks, complete failure of her left kidney, reflux and instability in her right kidney, and a stroke.

Her family has repeatedly reported that prison authorities deny her adequate medical care. In November 2023, the Public Prosecution issued an order to transfer her to a prison hospital. Prison authorities did not implement the order. In 2024, her husband submitted a petition requesting her release on medical and legal grounds. He received no response.

Medical negligence in Egyptian detention facilities is well documented and has contributed to numerous preventable deaths in custody. Given Abdel-Moneim's age and the severity of her conditions, her continued imprisonment places her life at serious and immediate risk.

Targeting of Human Rights Lawyers

Abdel-Moneim's prosecution forms part of a broader pattern of reprisals against lawyers and human rights defenders in Egypt. Counterterrorism

legislation has been systematically misused to criminalize peaceful legal work, silence independent voices, and dismantle the infrastructure of civic accountability.

Her treatment, prolonged pretrial detention, trial before an exceptional court with no right of appeal, re-detention after sentence completion, denial of medical care, and restriction of family visits, illustrates the multi-layered nature of judicial harassment directed at those who defend others.

International Legal Violations

The violations in Abdel-Moneim's case are numerous and severe. Her arrest without warrant and subsequent enforced disappearance violate Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Her trial before an emergency court without the right to appeal breaches Article 14 of the same treaty.

Her re-detention on substantially identical charges after serving a full sentence violates the prohibition on double jeopardy, a fundamental principle of criminal justice recognized in international and Egyptian law. The denial of adequate medical care may amount to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.

Taken together, these violations demonstrate the use of Egypt's judicial and detention systems as instruments of reprisal against a woman whose only "offense" was to defend others in court and to call for democratic reform in public.

Latest updates on this case Scan the code or visit: https://humena.org/defenders/hoda-abdel-moneim/

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