

ADVOCACY DOSSIER

IBRAHIM METWALLY HEGAZY

إبراهيم عبد المنعم متولي حجازي

Detained (pretrial) **Egypt**

Egyptian human rights lawyer detained at Cairo airport in September 2017 while travelling to brief the UN on enforced disappearances. Held in pre-trial detention for over eight years through serial case-rotation, he has been on trial since June 2025.

HuMENA.

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Case reference HM-EG-2026-026

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THE CASE AT A GLANCE

Egyptian human rights lawyer detained at Cairo airport in September 2017 while travelling to brief the UN on enforced disappearances. Held in pre-trial detention for over eight years through serial case-rotation, he has been on trial since June 2025.

STATUS	**Detained (pretrial)**
ARRESTED	**22 Oct 2019**
COUNTRY	**Egypt**
SENTENCE	**No verdict, held in pre-trial detention for 8+ years through serial case rotation.**
CHARGES	**Joining and financing a terrorist group; spreading false news; "communicating with foreign entities to harm national security" (Penal Code arts. 86 bis, 102 bis; Anti-Terrorism Law 94/2015 arts. 12, 13). Rotated across Cases 900/2017, 1470/2019 and 786/2020.**

WE CALL ON THE AUTHORITIES TO:

WHAT WE ASK

01 Release Ibrahim Metwally Hegazy 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 Ibrahim Metwally Hegazy with immediate, independent medical evaluation and the full treatment that condition requires, including transfer to an independent civilian hospital if necessary.

Latest updates on this case
Scan the code or visit:
https://humena.org/defenders/ibrahim-metwally-hegazy/

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DOCUMENTED VIOLATIONS

	INTERNATIONAL STANDARD
Arbitrary detention	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9
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
Judicial harassment	UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Articles 9, 12
Prolonged pretrial detention	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9(3)
Torture	Convention against Torture, Articles 1, 2 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 7

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HOW THE CASE UNFOLDED

8 July 2013

CONTEXT

Son forcibly disappeared

Ibrahim's son Amr Ibrahim Metwally was forcibly disappeared during the Republican Guard dispersal, prompting Ibrahim's years-long search for answers and his founding of the Association of the Families of the Forcibly Disappeared.

August 2017

CONTEXT

Invited to address the UN Working Group on Enforced Disappearances

He received an invitation from the UN human rights office to present his son's case to the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances in Geneva.

10 September 2017

ARREST

Detained at Cairo airport en route to UN Working Group

Officers stopped him at passport control as he was leaving to brief the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances. He was held incommunicado for two days and reportedly subjected to electric shocks.

12 September 2017

CHARGE FILED

Charged under State Security Case 900/2017

He was formally accused of joining a terrorist group and communicating with foreign entities, and ordered into pre-trial detention at Tora 2.

12 October 2019

CONTEXT

Release order not carried out

The Supreme State Security Prosecution ordered his release without bail in Case 900/2017, but the order was not carried out.

22 October 2019

START OF ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Disappeared at a National Security office

He disappeared for about 20 days and was abused at the National Security office in Kafr El Sheikh, blindfolded and tied to a wall.

5 November 2019

REAPPEARANCE IN CUSTODY

Reappears and is added to Case 1470/2019

He was officially recorded as arrested at his home in Kafr El Sheikh and added to Case 1470/2019, and the prosecution ordered his pretrial detention.

25 May 2020

CONTEXT

African Commission rapporteur writes to Egypt

The Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights wrote to the Egyptian president asking for an investigation into his torture and the terrorism accusations.

26 August 2020

CASE ROTATION (TADWIR)

Rotated again into Case 786/2020

A third case was opened against him, again on substantively identical terrorism charges, extending his detention beyond constitutional limits.

June 2022

TRANSFER BETWEEN PLACES OF DETENTION

Moved from Tora to Badr 3 prison

After five years in Tora Maximum Security 2, he was transferred to Badr 3 prison.

September 2024

REFERRAL TO TRIAL

Referred to trial in Case 900/2017

Prosecutors referred him to trial in Case 900/2017, together with 52 other defendants.

October 2024

REFERRAL TO TRIAL

Referred to trial in Case 1470/2019

Prosecutors referred him to trial in Case 1470/2019, together with 17 other defendants.

4 December 2024

MEDICAL CARE DENIED

Family requests transfer for urgent surgery

After doctors recommended an operation, his family petitioned the prosecution for a hospital transfer from Badr 3 prison. No response was received.

1 June 2025

HEARING

First trial session opens after eight years in detention

For the first time since his 2017 arrest, he appeared before a judge in a substantive trial hearing in one of the three cases. A second case opened ten days later.

22 September 2025

HEARING

First hearing in Case 786/2020

The first hearing in Case 786/2020 was held with 28 co-defendants and adjourned to 8 December 2025.

24 August 2026

HEARING

Hearing adjourned to 28 October 2026

At the latest hearing found, one of his cases was adjourned to 28 October 2026 to complete procedural steps. No verdict has been reported.

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THE FULL STORY

Background and work

Ibrahim Metwally Hegazy is a Cairo lawyer who turned to human rights work after his son Amr disappeared on 8 July 2013, during the Republican Guard events. He co-founded the Association of the Families of the Disappeared and worked with the Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms (ECRF), two of the only Egyptian organisations systematically documenting cases of enforced disappearance and assisting families in their search.

Arrest and detention

On 10 September 2017, he was stopped at Cairo International Airport on his way to Geneva, where he had been invited to address the 113th session of the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances. Officers from the National Security Agency took him into custody, held him incommunicado for two days, and reportedly tortured him. He was subsequently charged in connection with State Security Case 900/2017 and placed in pre-trial detention at the high-security Tora 2 prison.

Case rotation and trial

For seven years he was not tried. When prosecutors ordered his release in Case 900/2017 in October 2019, the order was not carried out: he disappeared for about 20 days at a National Security office in Kafr El Sheikh and was then added to Case 1470/2019. In August 2020, while release procedures in that case were under way, he was added to Case 786/2020. In September and October 2024 he was referred to trial in Cases 900/2017 and 1470/2019. His first trial began on 1 June 2025 and a second on 11 June, and the first hearing in Case 786/2020 was held on 22 September 2025. Hearings continue. He was held in Tora Maximum Security 2 until 2022 and since then in Badr 3 prison, where his family has asked for a transfer for urgent surgery without a response.

Current status as of 2026

Now about 61, he remains in detention in Badr 3, on trial in three cases, with serious untreated health problems. At the latest hearing found, on 24 August 2026, one case was adjourned to 28 October 2026. His case has become emblematic of the practice of "rotation", the indefinite holding of dissidents through serial recycling of identical charges.

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SAMPLE LETTER

Copy it, adapt it and send it from your own address.

Your Excellency,

I am writing to demand the immediate release of Ibrahim Metwally Hegazy, human rights lawyer; co-founder and coordinator of the Association of the Families of the Disappeared, currently detained in Egypt since 22 October 2019, and an end to all reprisals tied to this case.

In brief: Egyptian human rights lawyer detained at Cairo airport in September 2017 while travelling to brief the UN on enforced disappearances. Held in pre-trial detention for over eight years through serial case-rotation, he has been on trial since June 2025.

I respectfully urge your authorities to:
1. Release Ibrahim Metwally Hegazy immediately and unconditionally;
2. Drop all charges related to the peaceful exercise of fundamental rights;
3. Ensure unrestricted access to legal counsel, family, and adequate medical care while in detention;
4. Provide Ibrahim Metwally Hegazy with immediate, independent medical evaluation and the full treatment that condition requires, including transfer to an independent civilian hospital if necessary.

I will continue to monitor this case until Ibrahim Metwally Hegazy is free.

Respectfully,

[Your name]
[Your city, country]
8 November 2026