

Advocacy dossier

Magdy Abdel Hamid

مجدي عبد الحميد

At liberty **Egypt**

Magdy Abdel Hamid, chairman of the Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement, was barred from travel at Cairo airport in 2017 under the foreign funding case. The case against him was dropped in August 2021, when the investigative judge announced that travel bans and asset freezes were removed, and the case as a whole was closed in March 2024.

01
The case at a glance

Magdy Abdel Hamid, chairman of the Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement, was barred from travel at Cairo airport in 2017 under the foreign funding case. The case against him was dropped in August 2021, when the investigative judge announced that travel bans and asset freezes were removed, and the case as a whole was closed in March 2024.

Status **At liberty**	Country **Egypt**
Sentence No trial; the investigative judge dropped the Case 173 charges on 30 August 2021 and announced that the travel bans and asset freezes were removed. The authorities announced the closure of Case 173 on 20 March 2024.	
Charges Receiving illegal foreign funding Operating without legal authorization	

What we ask

We call on the authorities to:

01 Confirm publicly that no charge, restriction or proceeding remains against Magdy Abdel Hamid in connection with this case.

02 Guarantee that Magdy Abdel Hamid can continue peaceful human rights work without surveillance, summons or further reprisal.

03 Immediately lift the travel ban imposed on Magdy Abdel Hamid and on any family members affected by the same order.

04 Immediately unfreeze the personal and organisational accounts of Magdy Abdel Hamid.

02

Documented violations

Each violation and the international standard it breaks.

Asset freeze UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Article 13

Criminalisation of solidarity International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 21, 22
UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Article 5

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

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

03

How the case unfolded

2011

Investigation opened

Case 173 opened against civil society groups

Egyptian authorities opened Case 173, the foreign funding case, targeting dozens of civil society organizations including EACPE and its chairman Magdy Abdel Hamid.

2 October 2017

Travel ban imposed

Prevented from travel at Cairo airport

Magdy Abdel Hamid was barred from boarding a flight to Amman at Cairo airport at approximately 10:00 AM. He had received no prior notification of the travel ban.

30 August 2021

Case update

Charges dropped

The investigative judge authorized by Cairo Court of Appeal dropped Case 173 against Magdy Abdel Hamid, Azza Soliman, Negad El Borei, and Hossameldin Ali, and their organizations, without a trial.

30 August 2021

Travel ban lifted

Judge's decision lifts travel ban and asset freeze

In the press release announcing the end of the investigation against Magdy Abdel Hamid and the other defenders in Case 173 of 2011, the investigative judge said the travel bans and asset freezes against them and their organisations were removed. Amnesty International noted that it was unclear whether the Ministry of Interior had taken the names off its travel ban list.

20 March 2024

Case closed or dropped

Authorities announce closure of the foreign funding case

The authorities announced the closure of Case 173 of 2011 after 13 years of investigation. Amnesty International reported that travel bans on 29 of at least 31 defenders and NGO staff affected by the case had been lifted.

04

The full story

Update, 12 November 2026: this record was checked against current sources. Magdy Abdel Hamid is free: the investigative judge dropped Case 173 against him on 30 August 2021 and announced that the travel bans and asset freezes were removed, and the authorities announced the closure of the whole case on 20 March 2024. The lawyer Negad El Borai, Hossameldin Ali and Azza Soliman were cleared in the same decision, and Amnesty International also named Esraa Abdel Fattah among those it covered.

Background and Work

Magdy Abdel Hamid is chairman of the Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement (EACPE), an organization dedicated to strengthening the role of Egyptian citizens in civil society, public policy, and civic spaces. EACPE has focused on building platforms for participatory governance, promoting gender equity, and expanding women's engagement in policy dialogue. The organization's mission centers on enabling Egyptians to shape the policies and institutions that govern their lives.

His work placed him at the intersection of civic development and human rights in a country where independent organizing has been systematically criminalized. EACPE's programming sought to build the connective tissue of democratic participation at a time when Egypt's government was moving to sever those ties.

The Foreign Funding Case

In 2011, Egyptian authorities opened Case 173, known widely as the foreign funding case. The investigation targeted dozens of civil society organizations and their staff, accusing them of receiving illegal foreign funding and operating without legal authorization. The case became one of the most sweeping legal assaults on Egypt's independent civil sector, ensnaring rights defenders, development organizations, and advocacy groups across the spectrum.

Magdy Abdel Hamid and EACPE were among those charged. The case brought criminal proceedings, asset freezes on both personal and institutional accounts, and travel bans that prevented defenders from leaving Egypt. For years, the prosecution hung over Magdy and his colleagues, effectively paralyzing their work and isolating them from international partners and forums.

On 30 August 2021, the investigative judge authorized by the Cairo Court of Appeal decided to drop the case against Magdy and three co-defendants: Azza Soliman, Negad El Borai, and Hossameldin Ali. The decision ended the case against all four defenders and their organizations without a trial. The investigative judge announced that the travel bans and asset freezes against them were removed; Amnesty International said it was unclear whether the Ministry of Interior had taken their names off its travel ban list. On 20 March 2024 the authorities announced the closure of Case 173.

Travel Ban at Cairo Airport

On 2 October 2017, years before the charges were dropped, Magdy Abdel Hamid attempted to board a flight from Cairo to Amman to attend the Policy Forum on Development, organized under the Euro-

Mediterranean Partnership. At approximately 10:00 AM, passport control officials at Cairo airport prevented him from traveling. He had received no prior notification of a travel ban.

The incident exemplified a pattern in which Egyptian authorities impose restrictive measures on human rights defenders without prior notice. Travel bans, asset freezes, and other administrative sanctions continue to operate independently of judicial outcomes, effectively punishing defenders outside the framework of criminal law.

Broader Context

Magdy Abdel Hamid's case is part of a sustained campaign of legal harassment targeting Egypt's civil society. Over the three years following the opening of Case 173, dozens of organizations faced criminal charges. Several defenders associated with the case were subjected to travel bans, including Azza Soliman, Mohamed Zaree, Mozn Hassan, Hossameldin Ali, Ahmed Ghonim, Bassim Samir, Esraa Abdel Fattah, Hoda Abdelwahab, Nasser Amin, and Ahmed Ragheb.

The foreign funding case functioned as a legal mechanism to immobilize Egypt's independent human rights sector, cutting off organizations from foreign support, restricting their leaders' movement, and freezing the resources needed to operate. Even when courts dropped charges, administrative restrictions remained, leaving defenders in a state of permanent legal limbo.

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

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